



Soft Tissue Ankle Injury

Emergency Department Advice Leaflet



Most injuries to the ankle involve a sprain of the ligaments on the outside of your ankle (**below the bony part**). Very rarely does the injury require a plaster.

The vast majority of ankle injuries improve considerably within 7 days.

Recovery will be quicker if you follow these instructions:

1. **Rest** - take it easy for a few days.
2. **Ice** - helps to relieve swelling.
Apply ice (**frozen peas etc**) wrapped in a towel to the swollen area. Do this for 15 minutes four times a day for two days.
3. **Raise** - your ankle/foot above your hip when sitting or lying down.
This will help to reduce the swelling.
4. Take something for the pain, especially in the first few days.
5. You may have been given crutches if it was too painful to walk, however even on the crutches you should be attempting to put the foot down and take some weight on your ankle as this promotes soft tissue healing and reduces risk of blood clot.

EXERCISES

It is important to do the following exercises to aid recovery.

Days 1 to 3

Move your ankle up and down and from side to side. Remember to exercise your knee and hip.

Exercise

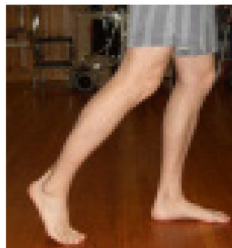
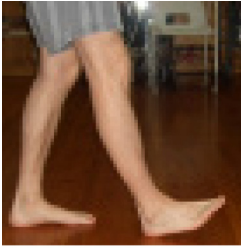
Pull your foot up towards you and point it down as far as possible. Repeat 10 - 15 times.



Days 4 to 7

You should be able to take some weight on your ankle. Remember to put your heel down first, then your toes. Bend your knee!

Exercise



Practice walking properly. Hit the ground with your heel first and let the heel bend (not a stiff leg), as you push off from the toes.

After Day 7

You should have much less pain now and be able to walk but be careful, it is too early to return to any sporting activities or long shopping trips.

If your ankle swells at the end of the day raise your ankle.

Boots will give you more support and are recommended for the first four weeks.

Practice standing on your affected leg. If you are still wobbly on your affected ankle, keep practising this exercise until you are steady. This may take weeks to months. When you are steady on your ankle you can return to your normal activities such as sport, dancing.

If you are not able to walk on your foot after seven days you should contact the **Emergency Department:**

University Hospital Hairmyres 01355 584716

University Hospital Monklands 01698 752005

University Hospital Wishaw 01698 366630

If your symptoms continue to worsen or do not show signs of improvement after a period of 6-12 weeks of following the advice above, a self-referral to physiotherapy can be made on our website:

<https://www.nhslanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk/services/physiotherapy-msk/> or via your GP.



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