

Ankle Sprain Exercises

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What is an Ankle Sprain?

An ankle sprain is an injury to the fibrous tissues that connect bone to each other (Ligaments), providing stability to the joint. The ligament is strained when over stretched or torn due to sudden inward or outward twisting or rolling of the ankle. The symptoms of ankle sprain are sudden pain around ankle when bearing weight, swelling, bruising, reduced mobility and instability when standing or walking.

Ankle sprains can be effectively rehabilitated through a series of home exercises that focus on improving strength, flexibility and balance. Here are some exercises you can do at home to help recover from an ankle sprain:

Ankle Sprain Home Exercise

Range of Motion Exercises

Alphabet Writing: Sit with your leg straight. Within your pain limitation, trace the alphabet in the air with your big toe. This helps in restoring ankle mobility.

Repeat: the trace 3 to 5 times



Strengthening Exercises

Towel Scrunches: Sit on a chair with a towel on the floor under your foot. Use your toes to scrunch the towel toward you. This strengthens the small muscles in your foot and ankle.

Sets: 2 to 3 sets, Repeat: 10 to 15 times



Calf Raises: Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart. Slowly lift your heels off the ground, balancing on your toes, then slowly lower your heels back down. You can hold onto a wall or chair for balance.

Sets: 2 to 3 sets, Repeat: 10 to 15 times



Resistance Band Exercises

Eversion (outward movement): Anchor a resistance band to a stable object and loop it around the outside of your foot. Push your foot outward against the band's resistance.

Sets: 2 to 3 sets, Repeat: 5 to 8 times



Inversion (inward movement): Hold the band to the outside of the foot and push your foot inwards.

Sets: 2 to 3 sets, Repeat: 5 to 8 times



Plantar Flexion: Point your toes downward against the resistance band.

Sets: 2 to 3 sets, Repeat: 5 to 8 times



Dorsiflexion: Pull your toes upward against the resistance band.

Sets: 2 to 3 sets, Repeat: 5 to 8 times



Balance Exercises

Single-Leg Stands: Stand on your injured foot for 30 seconds. Gradually increase the time as your balance improves. To challenge yourself further, try doing it with your eyes closed or on an unstable surface like a pillow.



Wobble Board: If available, use a wobble board or balance board to challenge your ankle stability. Stand on the board with both feet and try to maintain your balance for 30 seconds. Progress to standing on one foot.

Stretching Exercises

Towel Stretch: Sit on the floor with your leg extended. Place a towel around your foot and gently pull the ends to stretch your ankle and calf muscles.

Hold for 20 to 30 seconds, Repeat 3 times



Calf Stretch: Stand facing a wall. Place your hands on the wall and step back with the injured leg, keeping it straight. Bend your front knee and press the back heel down, stretching the calf.

Hold for 20 to 30 seconds, Repeat 3 times



Soleus Stretch: Similar to the calf stretch, but this time slightly bend the back knee to focus the stretch lower in the calf.

Hold for 20 to 30 seconds, Repeat 3 times



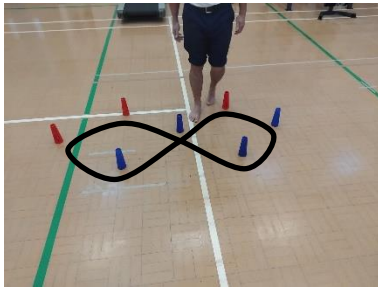
Proprioception and Coordination Exercises

Heel-to-Toe Walk: Walk in a straight line, placing the heel of your front foot directly in front of the toes of your back foot. This helps with coordination and balance.

Repeat: Walk back and forth 3 to 5 times



Figure-8 Drills: Imagine or draw a figure-8 on the ground and walk along the path, maintaining control and balance throughout.



Repeat: Walk round the figure 3 to 5 times

Advice

Start Slowly: Begin with gentle exercises and gradually increase intensity as your ankle heals.

Consistency: Perform these exercises regularly to see improvement.

Pain Management: If any exercise causes pain, stop immediately and consult with a healthcare professional.

Ice and Elevation: Continue using ice and keeping your ankle elevated to reduce swelling as needed.

If it doesn't improve

Ankle sprains are common injury that can range from mild to severe and should heal within 6 weeks with proper care. However, if your pain persists or increases with the exercises, or you feel that you have feelings of your ankle giving way, it is advisable to speak with your physiotherapist/GP/consultant.

Physiotherapy Departments

County Hospital Louth: 01507 631234

Grantham District Hospital: 01476 464253

Lincoln County Hospital: 01522 573945

Pilgrim Hospital Boston: 01205 445494

Johnson Community Hospital Spalding: 01775 652204

Skegness and District Hospital: 01754 613516

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