

Reference sources

- Ankle Injuries: www.patient.co.uk accessed 13.11.2014
- Balance Exercises: www.nhs.uk/livewell/fitness accessed 13.11.2014

Support groups

The British Orthopaedic Foot and Ankle Society

- www.bofas.org.uk
- Telephone: 07967 135517

Contact details

If you have you any other questions or problems please contact us.

Accident & Emergency Department

Telephone: 01483 571122 **ext** 2206 / 2207

or contact your own GP or phone 111

PALS and Advocacy contact details

Contact details of independent advocacy services can be provided by our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) who are located on the right hand side as you enter the main reception area. PALS are also your first point of contact for health related issues, questions or concerns surrounding RSCH patient services.

Telephone: 01483 402757

Email: rsc-tr.pals@nhs.net

Opening hours: 9.00am–3.00pm
Monday to Friday

If you would like information documents in large print, on tape or in another language or form please contact PALS.

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Ankle soft tissue injury

Accident & Emergency Department



Patient information leaflet

Ankle injuries commonly involve soft tissues. A sprain is a soft tissue injury involving a ligament, which is a tissue that attaches bones together and gives support to the joint. These can be injured usually by being overstretched; those at the side of the ankle are most commonly injured. A damaged ligament causes pain, swelling and bruising and restricted movement around the joint. A strain refers to a painful condition brought about by inflammation, overuse, and overstretching/tearing of muscles or tendons or joints. Most sprains and strains heal within a few weeks.

How do I look after my ankle injury?

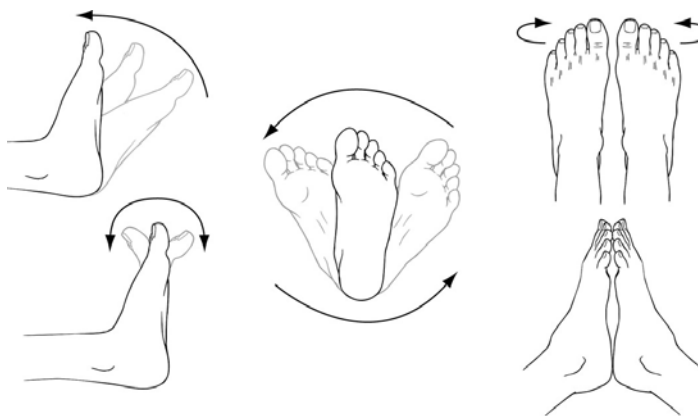
- Rest and elevate your leg, keeping your foot well above the level of your bottom, to help reduce the swelling in your ankle for 48-72 hours.
- Apply an ice pack to ease pain, swelling and bruising. Use frozen peas or crushed ice wrapped in a tea towel, do not apply ice straight to the skin as this may cause a cold burn. Place around the elevated ankle for 10-20 minutes and repeat every 2-3 hours for 48-72 hours.
- Take simple painkillers from over the counter for the first few days e.g. Paracetamol or Paracetamol and Codeine alternating with Ibuprofen as advised by your Doctor or Nurse.
- No Heat, Alcohol, Running or Massage (HARM) for 48-72 hours.
- Put as much weight through the foot as the pain allows. Try to walk with even strides heel first then toe.

- Wear sensible shoes, boots and avoid standing still, consider using ankle supports till the symptoms have resolved.
- Do not drive until you are confident you can perform an emergency stop.
- You should not play sport or do vigorous exercise involving the ankle for at least 3-4 weeks after the injury.

What exercises should I do?

Toe Circles:

- Move your foot up towards you and point it down again keeping your knee straight, wiggle your toes.
- Move your foot in circles from your ankle.
- Keep ankles together turn soles of feet towards each other and away from each other. (See Diagram)



Alphabet Exercises:

- With your leg stretched out try to write the alphabet in the air with your toes.

Balance Exercises:

Heel to toe walk:

- Standing upright place your right heel on the floor directly in front of your left toe. Then do the same with your left heel.
- Make sure you keep looking forwards at all times, if necessary put your fingers against a wall for stability. Try to perform at least five steps, move away from the wall as you progress.

One leg stand:

- Start by standing facing the wall with arms outstretched and your fingertips touching the wall. Lift your left leg; keep your hips level and keep a slight bend in the opposite leg. Gently place your foot back on the floor.
- Hold the lift for ten seconds and perform three on the left then three on the right.

Step-up: Use a step preferably with a railing or near to wall for support

- Step up with your right leg.
- Bring your left leg up to join it.
- Step down again and return to the start position.
- Step up and down slowly and in a controlled manner. Perform up to five steps with each leg.