

# Advice after spraining your ankle

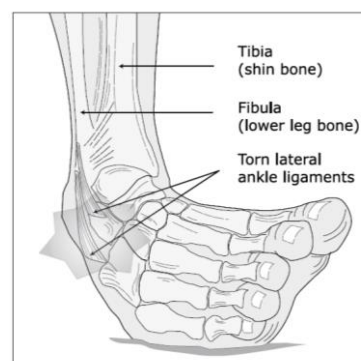
## Fracture Clinic Patient Information Leaflet

### Your injury

An ankle sprain means that you have had an injury to some of the soft tissues that support the ankle, such as the ligaments. You have sprained your ankle joint but you do not have any broken bones. This is a common injury.

The common symptoms following this type of injury include:

- Pain straight after an injury
- Swelling, mostly over the injured area
- Bruising
- Difficulty in weight bearing



### Your treatment plan

You may be given a removable boot or advised to wear a sensible shoe to support your ankle; this should be used for two to six weeks to enable you to walk more comfortably whilst the injury heals. You can remove the supportive shoe wear when resting, at night, and when bathing or showering. You can put your weight through the injured ankle and move it gently to prevent it getting too stiff. If required you will be given crutches or a frame to help you move safely.

These injuries almost always heal well with time and therefore follow up clinic appointments are usually not needed.

## What should I do at home?

- Use over the counter pain killers as required.
- Elevate the injured ankle when resting to help reduce swelling.
- In the first few weeks after injury, minimise the amount you move around to allow the pain and swelling to settle.
- You should not drive whilst in a wearing a boot. You may drive an automatic car if you have injured your left ankle.
- You can return to work as soon as you are able to do your normal duties.

## How long will it take to heal?

Most sprains heal without any problems in six to twelve weeks. However, it may take six to twelve months for your symptoms to settle completely – these can include pain or discomfort, stiffness, swelling, and decreased strength. The injury may take longer to heal if you suffer from diabetes or if you smoke.

For advice on stopping smoking please visit [www.nhs.uk/smokefree](http://www.nhs.uk/smokefree) or discuss this with your GP.

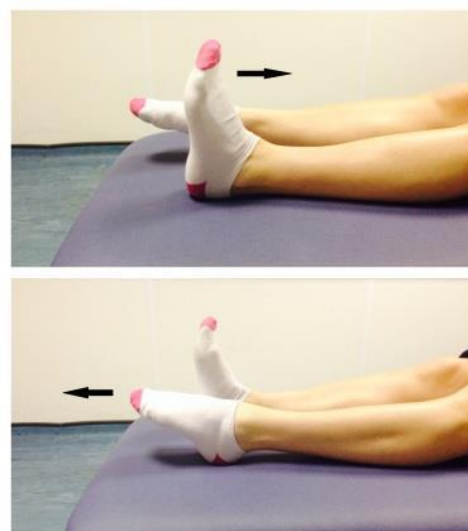
Once the sprain has started to heal some people might be referred to their local physiotherapy department for assessment, advice and rehabilitation.

## Exercises

You should try to do these exercises three to four times a day; you can start them immediately.

**Ankle and foot range of movement exercises. Repeat these ten times each:**

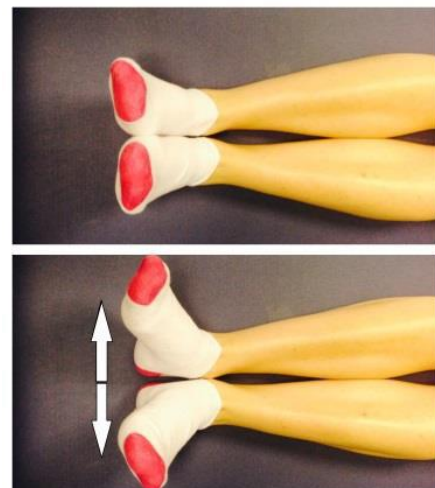
1. Point your foot up and down within a comfortable range of movement.



2. Make circles with your foot in one direction and then change direction.



3. With your heels together, move your toes apart, as shown in the picture



**If you have any worries or concerns please contact one of the following:**

**Virtual Fracture Clinic Helpline 01225 821668 or Fracture Clinic 01225 825602**

Trauma and Orthopaedic Department

Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust

Combe Park, Bath BA1 3NG

01225 428331 [www.ruh.nhs.uk](http://www.ruh.nhs.uk)

Please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) if you require this leaflet in a different format, or would like to feedback your experience of the hospital. Email [ruh-tr.PatientAdviceandLiaisonService@nhs.net](mailto:ruh-tr.PatientAdviceandLiaisonService@nhs.net) or telephone 01225 825656.