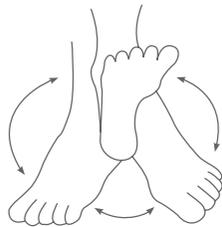


Sitting with your foot in the air, slowly pull the toes and foot towards you, hold for 3 seconds and then point your toes and foot away from you and hold for 3 seconds. Repeat 10-20 times, 2-3 times daily.



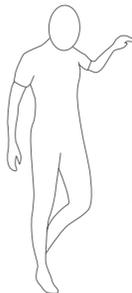
Sitting with your foot in the air, rotate your foot clockwise, making large circles with your foot. Repeat this 10-20 times. Then repeat the exercises counter-clockwise. Repeat 2-3 times daily in each direction.



Sitting with your foot in the air, move your foot inwards as far as possible, keeping the knee/leg still. Hold for 3 seconds and then move your foot outwards as far as possible keeping the knee and leg still. Hold for 3 seconds. Repeat 10-20 times, 2-3 times daily.



Stand on one leg (the injured leg) with the knee slightly bent next to a wall for support. Only keep 1-2 fingers on the wall to make the ankle work harder. Hold for 30-60 seconds. Repeat 3-6 times daily.



## Patient Advice and Liaison Service

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) provides confidential help and advice to patients and carers. For further information please contact the PALS team on **020 8937 7173** or email [pals@barnet.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@barnet.nhs.uk)

If you require this information in large print, please contact the Communications Department on **020 8937 7644**

If you need an interpreter to explain this document, please telephone **020 8732 6454**

**Gujarati** આ દસ્તાવેજ તમને સમજાવી શકે એવા એક દુભાષિયાની જરૂર હોય, તો કૃપા કરી ૦૨૦ ૮૭૩૨ ૬૪૫૪ પર ટેલિફોન કરો.

**Farsi** شفاہی نیاز دارید، لطفاً با 020 8732 6454 تماس بگیرید. اگر برای دریافت توضیح در مورد این سند به مترجم

**Turkish** Eğer bu belgeyi size birisinin tercüme etmesini istiyorsanız, lütfen şu numarayı arayın: 020 8732 6454

**Cantonese** 如果你需要一名翻譯來解釋這篇文件，請致電 020 8732 6454

**Arabic** المستند، الرجاء الإتصال على رقم 020 8732 6454 إذا كنت في حاجة إلى مترجم فوري لشرح هذا

**Somali** Haddii aad u baahan tahay turjume kuu sharxa dokumentigan, fadlan soo wac talefoonkan 020 8732 6454

**Mandarin** 如果你需要一名翻译来解释这篇文件，请致电 020 8732 6454

**Polish** Jeżeli do wyjaśnienia niniejszego dokumentu potrzebny jest tłumacz, proszę zadzwonić pod numer 020 8732 6454

**Albanian** Nëse ju nevojitet përkthyes për t'ju shpjeguar këtë dokument, ju lutemi telefononi 020 8732 6454

# Ankle sprain

Musculoskeletal Physiotherapy Service



## Treatment and advice

### What is a sprained ankle?

A sharp twisting force at the ankle can cause disruption or damage of the ligaments that provide stability to the ankle and help hold the ankle bones in alignment. This causes pain and inflammation and may result in swelling and bruising.

### What can I do to help with the pain and swelling?

Basic movements of the ankle, while painful initially, will result in a decrease in pain and stiffness.

In the first 72 hours after injury, applying an ice-pack regularly to the injured area for up to ten minutes at a time will help reduce swelling and give some pain relief. This can be repeated as often as every two hours (a pack of frozen peas/carrots works just as well!). The leg should be kept elevated when sitting or lying down to help the swelling resolve.

You may need pain medication. It is best to seek advice from a pharmacist or your GP regarding the best type of painkillers for you.

### Should I walk on the injured ankle?

Although it may be painful, research shows that early movement and taking weight on the sprained ankle results in a faster recovery period. You can rest your ankle initially by just doing some basic ankle movements while sitting with the foot elevated. It is important that you start trying to stand and walk on the foot/ankle within 48 hours of the injury.

## Treatment and advice

### How long will it take for my ankle to heal?

This will vary from person to person as it is influenced by a number of factors, including: the severity of the sprain, age, activity level, medication, pre-existing medical conditions, etc.

In general, most injuries will feel significantly better within two weeks and completely better by about six weeks.

### When should I seek help?

If after two weeks you are still having significant pain and difficulty walking, contact your GP as you may need a referral to physiotherapy to help regain the full function of your ankle.

If you notice the following symptoms you should either contact your GP or attend your local walk-in centre or A&E, as your ankle may require further investigation:

- Pins and needles in the foot or toes since the injury
- The foot or toes appear blue in colour (this does not include bruising, which is often present with this type of injury).

## Exercises

### Why is it necessary for me to do the exercises?

As mentioned earlier, the exercises help decrease pain and swelling by increasing the blood flow to the area. This 'flushes out' the chemicals responsible for inflammation and helps return fluid into the circulation from the damaged tissues.

When the ligament heals, it heals with scar tissue which is very inflexible and tight. The exercises help to loosen and stretch the scar tissue, aligning it properly with the ligament. Not doing the exercises will result in tight scar tissue which pulls on the ligaments during movement, causing persistent pain.

### Exercises:

- It is normal to feel some pain while doing these exercises. This will ease gradually as your body gets used to the movement
- It is fine if you can't complete the number of repetitions for each exercise as suggested. Start with as many of each exercise as you can manage and gradually increase them when you feel you able to
- Exercises should be done slowly and gently, avoiding quick, jerky movements
- Exercises 1 - 3 should be done from day one post-injury, but exercise 4 should only be done once the pain has resolved by 50 - 75%.