



## Ankle sprain

### What is an ankle sprain?

An ankle sprain occurs when the ligaments that hold the ankle joint together are stretched or torn. In a minor sprain, some of the fibres within the ligament are stretched. In more serious sprains the ligament may be torn, either partially or completely. Most sprains take a maximum of 4 to 6 weeks to heal.

### Advice

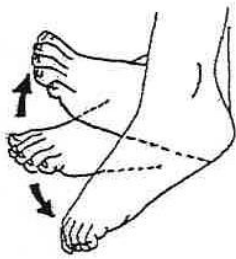
- 1) Apply ice to the sore area for 10 to 15 minutes four times per day for the first two days. Put the ice in a plastic bag and place a towel between the bag of ice and your skin.
- 2) After two days, you may apply heat to the injury to help relieve pain. Use a hot water bottle wrapped in a towel.
- 3) Keep your leg raised whenever possible to lessen swelling.
- 4) Use crutches as instructed until you can walk without causing excessive pain. Start to bear weight on your affected foot gradually.
- 5) Take paracetamol and/or ibuprofen for pain relief as directed
- 6) . Wear comfortable shoes.

### Seek medical attention if:

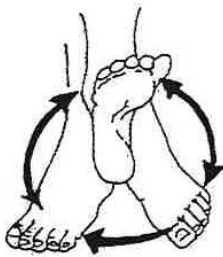
- there is worsening pain and swelling
- your toes feel cold and/or numb
- there is a change in toe or toe nail colour – if they become pale or blue
- movement of toes causes excessive pain
- you have difficulty in weight bearing after a week

## Recovery

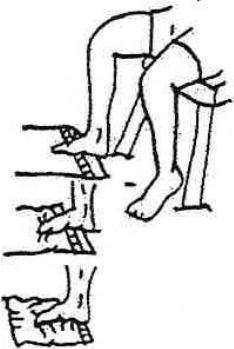
- Following a sprain or a strain, the length of time that it will take for you to recover will depend on how severe the injury is.
- Depending on its severity, after an ankle sprain you will probably be able to walk within 1-2 weeks after the injury. You may be able to use your ankle fully after 6-8 weeks and you will probably be able to return to sporting activities after 8-12 weeks.
- After 24-48 hours rest these exercises will help maintain the range of movement as the healing process continues, do 10 of each of these exercises 3 times/day



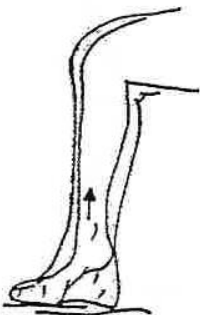
Bend ankle up towards body as far as possible, Hold for 5 seconds. Now point toes away from body and hold for 5 seconds



Move your ankle around slowly in a large circle, repeat in the opposite direction



Begin with foot flat on floor with towel as shown, keeping your heel on the floor repetitively “scrunch up” the towel with your toes.



Sit in a chair with your feet touching the floor. Push toes down to raise heel as shown, hold for 5 seconds

Assume position as shown, pulling the toes towards your body so that you feel the stretch, hold for 5 seconds



See your GP if pain persists after a week, they may refer you for physiotherapy if necessary.

### Further information

More information is available Clinical Knowledge Summaries:

<http://cks.nice.org.uk/sprains-and-strains>

### Tell us your views

If you wish to discuss any aspect of your treatment and care, please speak to a senior member of staff or to the nurse looking after you. The matrons are also available during normal working hours and they welcome your views.

### Friends and Family Test

Whatever your experience you can give feedback by answering the Friends & Family test question – How likely are you to recommend our A&E Department to family and friends if they needed similar care or treatment?

This can be completed online at <http://surveys.this.nhs.uk> using tag name **chftae** or by completing the form available within the department.