

Rehabilitation

On seeing your Physiotherapist you will be assessed and given advice and treatment on whatever they feel is most appropriate.

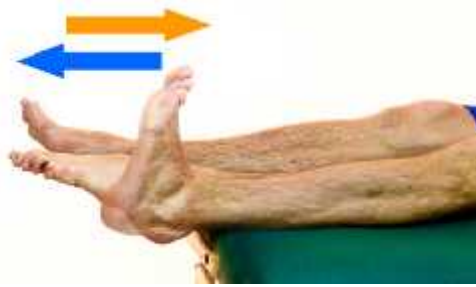
Physiotherapy is aimed at helping decrease the pain and swelling and to help restore movement and then to strengthen the ankle.

Ultrasound and Electrotherapy may be used to help reduce the pain and swelling.

Your Physiotherapist will offer you lots of advice on exercises, and self-management to enable you to return to your normal activities as soon as possible. Sometimes, in order to allow a quicker return to sport, strapping or an ankle support can be used to provide added stability.

At first, rehabilitation will involve ankle mobility exercises. It is important to try to regain the movement of the ankle joint as soon as pain will allow to aid recovery.

Your Physiotherapist will also advise you on exercises to strengthen the ankle and also to build up to balance reactions to prevent re-injury which is very important after such an injury.



Move your foot up and down.



Move your foot slowly from side to side, then slowly make circles with them.



Using a towel gently pull the foot towards you.

Ankle Sprain



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The Ankle

A sprained ankle is the most common type of ankle injury. It is the stretching and tearing of the ligaments that hold the ankle bones and joint in position.

A ligament is an elastic structure. Ligaments usually stretch within their limits and return back to their normal positions, but when a ligament is forced to stretch beyond its normal limit, a sprain occurs.



Ankle sprains happen when the foot twists, rolls or turns beyond its normal range. The most common ankle sprain happens when you 'go over' on your ankle. This is when the sole of the foot turns inwards resulting in an injury on the lateral aspect (outside of the ankle).

It can happen in sporting activities or even simply by losing your balance on an uneven surface.

Types of Sprain

Sprains of the ankle are categorized into 3 groups:

Grade I Sprain - Slight stretching and some damage to the fibers of the ligament. Generally consists of mild pain, little swelling with some joint stiffness. Function is normally maintained.

Grade II Sprain - Partial tearing of the ligaments. Usually consists of moderate levels of pain and swelling with joint stiffness. Moderate loss of function evident with pain and difficulty walking.

Grade III Sprain - Complete tear or rupture of the ligament. Usually intense initial pain followed by little or no pain due to total disruption of the ligament fibers. Swelling can be profuse with severe movement loss. Loss of function with severe difficulty weight bearing (walking).

Treatment and Rehabilitation

Basic treatment can be administered immediately but if there is evidence of excessive pain/any obvious bone damage or severe problems weight bearing, it is wise to seek advice from your G.P. or go straight to your local A & E department. It is important to get the diagnosis right from the start.

Immediate Treatment – R.I.C.E.

Rest the injury initially. Try to avoid weight bearing for 24 hours but partial weight bearing as soon as the pain will allow. You don't have to be inactive but be sure the ankle is being rested.

Ice should be applied immediately. It keeps the swelling down. Use either a specialist ice pack or a bag of frozen peas. Always use a damp cloth between the ice and skin to help prevent ice burn. This can be done several times a day for 15 minutes.

Compression with a bandage/tubigrip will help reduce the swelling. (Be aware of swelling with a tight bandage - this can cause pins and needles or discolouration of the toes).

Elevate the joint as much as possible. This can be achieved by placing the foot onto pillows, or at night by raising the foot off the bed with an old phone book or similar.