



# How to treat your injured ankle

Service provided by

**Sirona**  
care & health

Following injury, your ankle may be swollen, bruised, painful or stiff. In order to help the natural healing process, follow the advice below.

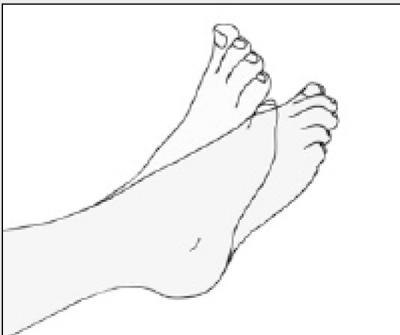
### **During the first 3 days**

Rest as much as possible to discourage swelling, placing the ankle in an elevated position. Make sure your knee is supported.

Frozen peas or crushed ice in a damp tea towel can be applied to the injured area. For maximum effect, apply for up to 20 minutes, every 2 hours. Cold can burn, so remove if uncomfortable.

### **After 3 days**

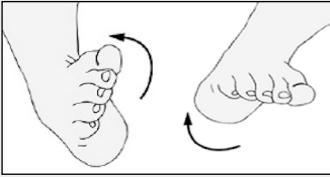
Once the ankle feels less hot and painful, it is essential to start simple flexibility exercises to prevent stiffness. The exercises suggested should be performed slowly and thoroughly, moving into discomfort but short of pain. They can be repeated hourly through the day.



#### **Exercise 1**

Move your foot up and down at the ankle, moving as far as possible in each direction.

**Repeat 10 times.**



## Exercise 2

Move your foot in and out at the ankle, so the sole of the foot turns inwards and then outwards.

**Repeat 10 times.**



## Exercise 3

Combine all the above movements by moving the foot and ankle in as large a circle as possible.

**Repeat 10 times.**

Compare the movements of your injured ankle with those of your other ankle. They should eventually be the same.

## General exercise

As soon as you are able to put some weight through your injured ankle, start to get up and about more, gradually disregarding your crutches if you have them. Short walks are good for the healing ankle. Steadily build up your walking distance.

Progress your exercises to include the following as soon as you can take full weight comfortably on your injured ankle.

## **Exercise 4 - for balance and control**

- Time how long you can stand on your injured ankle without overbalancing. Then practice on your injured leg until it is as good as your other leg.
- Once you can do the above for 1 minute, practice throwing, catching or bouncing a ball whilst balancing on your injured leg.
- Try balancing on one leg and closing your eyes. You should eventually be equally good on each leg.

## **Exercise 5 - For strength**

Hold on to a firm support with your feet slightly apart. Then rise up onto your toes and down.

**Repeat until tired, 3 to 4 times daily.**

## **Exercise 6 - to regain essential movement**

Lean forward on a firm surface, placing the injured foot flat in front of your other foot. Lean slowly forward, pushing your knee over your foot whilst keeping your heel flat to the floor.

Hold at the point of tightness for 15 seconds.

**Repeat 4 times.**

Evidence shows that the sooner this exercise improves, the more likely your ankle is to fully recover.

If you are keen on keeping fit, then swimming and cycling are suitable forms of exercise but do not return to any sport involving running until your ankle is free of pain, fully mobile and strong.

Depending on how badly your ankle is sprained, this may take between 4 to 8 weeks, longer in the case of severe sprains. It is worth knowing that following a sprain, the ankle can look thickened or swollen for some time.

If you are concerned about the progress of your ankle, then contact your GP or the department that you originally attended.

## Contact us

Our minor injury and urgent treatment centres support the local community with urgent minor injuries and/or illnesses. They are led by our specialist emergency nurse practitioners, who are fully trained in both adult and paediatric care.

They are walk-in centres so you don't need an appointment or a referral – you can just arrive at the centre during opening hours. These centres are not appropriate for life-threatening injuries or serious illnesses.

### **Bristol Urgent Treatment Centre**

#### **Minor injuries and illnesses**

Open 8am-8pm, 7 days a week

South Bristol NHS Community Hospital

Hengrove Promenade

Hengrove, Bristol BS14 0DE

T: **0300 124 6260**

### **Yate Minor Injury Unit**

#### **Minor injuries only**

Open 8am-8pm, 7 days a week

Yate West Gate Centre

21 West Walk, Yate BS37 4AX

T: **0300 125 6800**

### **Clevedon Minor Injury Unit**

#### **Minor injuries only**

Open 8am-8pm, 7 days a week

North Somerset Community Hospital

Old Street, Clevedon BS21 6BS

T: **01275 546852**





## Let us know what you think and get involved

**T:** 0300 124 5300\*

**E:** [sirona.hello@nhs.net](mailto:sirona.hello@nhs.net)

**W:** [www.sirona-cic.org.uk](http://www.sirona-cic.org.uk)

\*Calls from landlines are charged up to 10p per minute; calls from mobiles vary, please check with your network provider. This is not a premium-rate number.

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