



**Nottingham
Orthopaedics**

NHS
Nottingham
University Hospitals
NHS Trust

Stable Ankle Fracture or Sprain

Information for patients

Fracture Clinic



This document can be provided in different languages and formats. For more information please contact:

Fracture Clinic
QMC
Derby Road, Nottingham
Tel: 0115 924 9924 ext 61260

Your diagnosis

You have a small fracture or sprain of your ankle. This involves the end of the bone called the fibula. Sometimes people rupture their ankle ligaments – an **ankle sprain**. The ligaments are the strong tissue between two different bones – they work to hold the bones in position. Other times the strong ankle ligaments pull off a piece of bone creating a **fracture** – usually from the end of the fibula. A fracture is the same as a “broken bone”. It will be painful and swollen whilst the injury heals.

Treatment

These injuries will heal by themselves. You will struggle to put weight on your ankle at first – this is normal and is your body’s way of protecting the injury. Your foot and ankle will be bruised and swollen. You should take simple painkillers as required. As your pain settles you should start putting weight on your foot. You will gradually be able to put more and more weight on your foot as your symptoms allow.

A “walking boot” may allow you to start putting weight on your foot sooner. Use it if you find it helps you walk **but there is no need to use it if you don’t find it helpful**. You don’t need to sleep in it and should stop using it as soon as your symptoms allow. It should not be used for any longer than six weeks. Crutches also may help you get about more easily. These can be discarded as soon as you feel able to walk without them.

Recovery

It may take a long time to fully recover from your injury. Most people can walk reasonably comfortably by six weeks. The full recovery will take much longer and many people will still have some aching after several months. Most people’s symptoms will progressively improve. Bruising usually resolves after a few weeks. Many patients’ foot and ankle remain swollen, particularly at the end of the day, for several months.

Rehabilitation

You can drive when you are safe to control a car. You can work if your symptoms don't stop you from doing your job. You may need a sick note depending on what your job involves.

You can resume your normal sporting activities when your symptoms allow. Most patients will not be able to run or take part in sports for at least six weeks. Most people would need to then spend a further six weeks gradually building back up to their normal level of activity.

If you are concerned about your recovery or symptoms, you can return to the fracture clinic to see a surgeon or physiotherapist to discuss your recovery. Most patients do not need formal physiotherapy. Patients who have had recurrent ankle sprains may however benefit from physiotherapy and this can be booked using the contact information at the end of this leaflet.

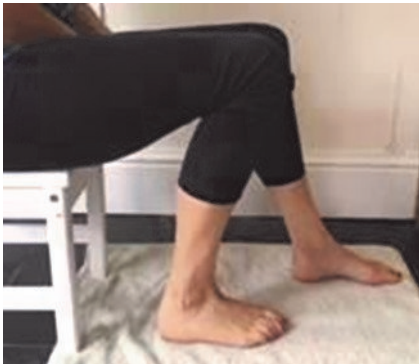
Elevating your foot and ankle will help reduce pain and swelling. If possible, you should lay almost flat and have your injured leg elevated on two pillows so that it is higher than your chest. Ice may also help with swelling. Apply ice wrapped in a damp towel for **15–20 minutes** every 2–3 hours during the day. **Ice should not be left on during sleep.**

Exercises

1. Ankle movements while sitting down

Lift your injured foot off the floor and move your foot and ankle up and down. Then move your foot around drawing an imaginary circle with your big toe.

Put your foot on the floor and slide it backwards as if to put it under your seat, keeping the heel down on the floor.



2. Seated heel raises

Sit with your foot flat on the ground and keeping your toes on the floor raise your heel up and off the floor and then back down.

When you are able to stand safely at your kitchen counter and pain allows, you can progress to standing heel raises.

3. Standing heel raises

Put your hands or elbows on the worktop and lean forward to take some weight through your arms. In this position start repeated heels raises.



Start with 3 sets of 10. Once not too uncomfortable, start taking more and more weight through your affected side and less and less through your arms.

Once 3 sets of 10 becomes comfortable, do more until fatigued.

Exercise videos

If you have access to the internet through your smartphone or computer you can access our online advice videos for exercises. Scan the QR codes below.

Early Exercises	Intermediate Exercises	Standing Exercises
		

Key points

1. If you feel you are failing to make satisfactory progress with your symptoms you should return to the physiotherapy department using your open appointment.
2. Take regular pain relief as required. Usually over the counter medications are sufficient.
3. Your symptoms should progressively improve with time. Most of the recovery occurs in the first six weeks. The final improvement often takes a lot longer.

Contact us

Physiotherapy

You will have an open appointment in the physiotherapy department. If you feel you are not making appropriate progress with your **movements** or **pain** then please get in contact for a face to face appointment:

If you need to get in touch please call **0115 849 3312** between 8am and 4pm, Monday to Friday.

Fracture Clinic

If there is another problem with your progress following your injury you can book in for a face to face appointment with the fracture clinic to see a doctor:

If you need to get in touch please call **0115 924 9924 ext: 61260** between 8am and 5pm, Monday to Friday.



Notes

Feedback

We appreciate and encourage feedback. If you need advice or are concerned about any aspect of care or treatment please speak to a member of staff or contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS):

Freephone: 0800 183 0204

From abroad: +44 115 924 9924 ext 65412 or 62301

Deaf and hard of hearing: text 07812 270003

E-mail: pals@nuh.nhs.uk

Letter: NUH NHS Trust, c/o PALS, Freepost NEA 14614,
Nottingham NG7 1BR

www.nuh.nhs.uk



You can also scan the QR code to leave patient, family or carer feedback. After scanning the QR code please go to 'How can I leave my feedback' and select the service that you have accessed and then follow the on screen prompts.

If you require a full list of references for this leaflet please email
patientinformation@nuh.nhs.uk or phone 0115 924 9924
ext. 67184.

The Trust endeavours to ensure that the information given here
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