

Ankle Sprain

If you require further advice or are not sure then please contact your GP or phone 111

This leaflet can be made available in alternative languages / formats on request.

如有需要，本传单可提供其他语言/版式
此單張的其他語言/格式版本可按要求提供

Na żądanie ta ulotka może zostać udostępniona w innych językach/formatach.

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General information

The doctor / practitioner who has seen you has diagnosed you with an ankle sprain. This means that you have damaged one or more of the ligaments surrounding the ankle joint. Ligaments are strong structures that connect bone to bone and support joints.

Sprains can take several weeks to heal, especially if there is significant damage to the ligament.

Following the advice in this leaflet will help the ankle to heal and hopefully reduce the risk of it happening again.

It's usually safe to put weight through your ankle after it is sprained. It is very unusual to need crutches.

Treatment

- ◆ Rest your ankle for the first 24-48 hours. This means avoiding walking long distances or strenuous activity. It does not mean not moving your ankle. Ice will help
- ◆ Ice can be used to help reduce the swelling and help with the pain. Wrap a bag of frozen peas (or similar) in a towel and put over the swollen area for 10 minutes, then remove and repeat for a further 10 minutes. You can do this every 2 hours.
- ◆ Never place ice directly in contact with skin as this can cause burns
- ◆ Elevate your leg when you are sitting down. Put your leg up higher than your hip as this will help drain the swelling.
- ◆ We do not advise putting tubigrip or other bandages on an ankle injury as it does not offer benefit, makes the exercises harder to complete properly and hinders the use of ice on the swelling.
- ◆ Do the exercises outlined in this leaflet
- ◆ Take regular painkillers. We advise simple paracetamol and ibuprofen. You will not get as much benefit if you only take them occasionally or wait until the pain is severe. Your doctor/practitioner will advise you about this in more detail.

Exercises

Exercise prevents stiffness in your ankle and will strengthen muscles around your ankle joint, reducing the risk of recurrent ankle sprains. Do the exercises 3-4 times a day (start immediately):

1. Lying down, pull your feet towards you, hold for 5 seconds and then push them away for 5 seconds. Repeat 5 times.
2. Lying down, turn the soles of your feet in and then out, keeping your knees still. Repeat 5 times.
3. Sit on a chair, feet flat on the floor. Slide your injured foot backwards along the floor keeping your foot flat on the floor throughout. Repeat 5 times.

Do the following exercise 48 hours after the injury:

1. Stand on your bad leg. If you need to, hold on to something for balance. Whilst standing on your bad leg, stand on your tip-toes and then rock back onto your heels. Repeat 5 times.

If your ankle does not seem to be improving after 14 days your GP surgery will have a physiotherapy self-referral form you can complete.