

Children's Physiotherapy Service Patient Information

Ankle sprain/ injury

What is an ankle sprain?



A sprain is when you over-stretch the soft tissues that hold the ankle bones together (ligaments).
This usually happens if you roll, twist or turn your ankle in an awkward way.

Symptoms



- Ache or pain
- Weakness
- Swelling
- Bruising
- Cannot put full weight on the ankle
- Cannot use normally

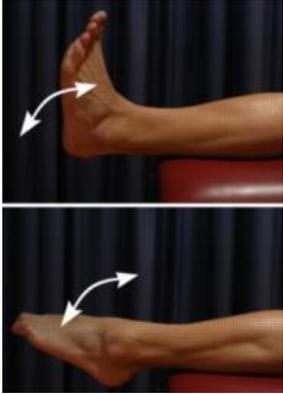
Treatment for the first 2-3 days

Protection



Protect from further injury. For example use a support or high-top lace up shoes.

<p>Rest</p> 	<p>Stop exercise and activity for first 2-3 days only.</p>
<p>Ice</p> 	<p>Use ice for up to 20 minutes every 2-3 hours:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use an ice pack or bag of frozen vegetables • Wrap in a damp towel • You can refreeze refreeze the vegetables and use again but do not eat. • Do not leave on whilst sleeping
<p>Compression</p> 	<p>Wrap a bandage or stocking on the ankle for support and help with swelling. Make sure it is snug but not too tight Take off at night and bed time</p>
<p>Elevation</p> 	<p>When sitting support the ankle above the hip as much as possible.</p>
<p>Medication</p> 	<p>Speak to a pharmacist. They may suggest: Pain relief such as paracetamol and ibuprofen for the swelling. Do not take ibuprofen for first 48 hours as can slow the healing.</p>

Exercises for the first 2 weeks	
	<p>Complete these 4 exercises three times a day</p> <p>This will help your child's ankle from getting stiff, weak and reduce pain and swelling</p>
<p>Exercise 1, bending and straightening the ankle:</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Point your toes away from your body as far as you can • Then pull them back towards your body as far as you can • Do this 10-15 times slowly and repeat 1-2 times
<p>Exercise 2, rolling the ankle:</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sit with your foot on the floor • Lift the sole of your foot inwards • Lift the sole of your foot outwards • Do this 10-15 times slowly and repeat 1-2 times
<p>Exercise 3, turning the ankle</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turn your foot in a circle 10-15 times one way • Repeat the other direction • Do this 10-15 times slowly and repeat 1-2 times <p>Also practice making shapes such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lines • circles

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • letters of the alphabet. For example spell your name out using the big toe as a pencil.
<p>Exercise 4, ankle stretch</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place a towel or exercise band around the bottom the foot • Pull towel up to feel a stretch in the calf with your hands • Hold for 30 seconds • Repeat 3 times
<p>Activity and sports</p>	
 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After the injury your child should return to school • You should tell your child's school they have sprained their ankle • They may benefit from wearing supportive high-top, lace up footwear outside the school uniform policy while recovering • They can return to sport and PE when they have full and painless movement and the ankle strength has returned • Your child should gradually return to activities including; high-impact activities such as running, jumping and hopping as comfort allows • It may take 6-8 weeks to get better and return to all sport and activities

How long will the ankle take to get better?

Most ankle sprains get better in 6-8 weeks but it can take up to 12 weeks to fully recover (NHS and NICE)

Further advice



If after 5-7 days your child has problems with:

- Weight-bearing and walking
- Worsening pain or swelling

Please contact 111 or GP for further advice.

If after two weeks your child is unable to:

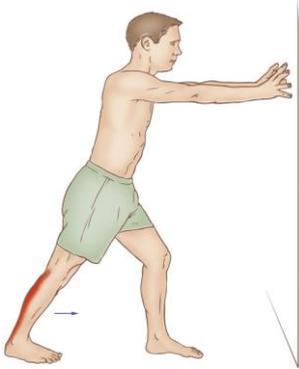
- Put full weight on the ankle
- Move the ankle fully
- Complete all the exercises

Please contact the GP for further advice possible physiotherapy referral.

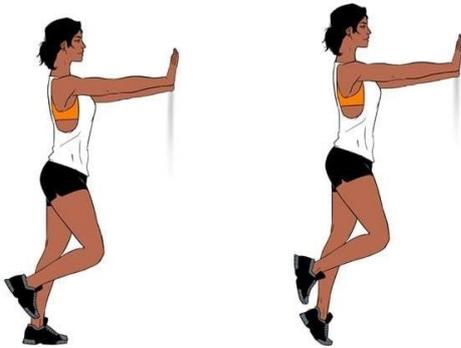
If after 8-weeks your child is unable to:

- Stand on the injured ankle for at least 10-30 seconds and balance.
- Return to P.E and sport

Please contact the GP for further advice possible physiotherapy referral.

Exercises for 2-6 weeks after ankle sprain	
	<p>Help your child with the following 4 exercises:</p>
<p>Exercise 1, ankle stretch</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stand with one leg forward and both feet facing forwards • Keep back knee straight • Slowly bend front knee forwards • Stop when you feel a stretch in the calf • Hold for 30 seconds • Repeat 3 times on both leg <p>Do this twice a day</p>
<p>Exercise 2, two-leg calf raise</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stand holding on to a stable surface. For example secure worktop • Slowly go up onto your tip-toes and back down • Do this 10-15 times slowly • Gradually increase until able to do three sets of 10-15 <p>Do this 3-4 times a week</p>

Exercise 2, one-leg calf raise



Only do this exercise if able to do 3 sets of 10-15 of Exercise 2 (two-leg calf raise)

- Stand holding on for balance to a stable surface
- Stand on one leg
- Slowly go up onto your tip-toes and back down
- Do this 10-15 times slowly on both legs
- Gradually increase until able to do three sets of 10-15

Do this 3-4 times a week

Balancing exercises with supervision



Stand near a stable surface in case you lose your balance.

1. Stand on one leg

- Try to hold for 10-30 seconds
- Do this 3 times on both legs

2. Repeat balance exercise 1 with your eyes closed

3. Repeat balance exercise 1 standing on a pillow/cushion (eyes open)



When to contact the Physiotherapy team at the Lighthouse Child Development Centre on 03442573952.



- If your child is unable to put their full weight on their ankle after 2 weeks
- If the ankle is still very painful and swollen after 8 weeks
- If they are not able to complete the exercises, or return to P.E and sport after 8 weeks