

Children's Emergency Department

Ankle Sprain: Parent/Carer Discharge information



A sprain is an injury to the ligaments that hold the bones together at a joint. It never shows up on an X-ray. The swelling and pain may persist for weeks and even months.

Average recovery time is six weeks. Bruising may also develop and might appear a few days after the initial injury.

It is important to return the joint to normal function through exercise as soon as it is safe and possible. It is important that you discuss which exercises are suitable for your child before you leave.

What should my child do now?

- Start walking as normally as possible one day after the injury. Wear flat shoes;
- Elevate the injured limb whenever possible in order to minimise swelling. You need to make sure that the foot is higher than the hip;
- Apply ice, or a cold pack of frozen peas, wrapped in a towel to any painful areas for up to five minutes when possible or after ankle exercises. **Remember** ice can cause a burn if applied direct to skin or for too long a time;
- Your child should avoid certain sports until they can run without pain;
- Average recovery time is six weeks.

What pain relief medication can I give my child/adolescent?

Paracetamol and or Ibuprofen (if applicable) to be given for pain,
Paracetamol 4-6 hourly last given at..... Ibuprofen 6-8 hourly
last given at.....



Patient Information

Return to school/activity:

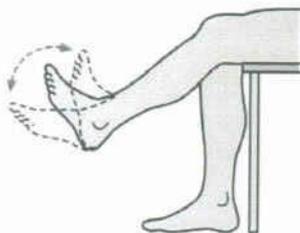
You will need to inform the school/college that your child has sustained an ankle injury and they will need to refrain from certain activities to rest the ankle/foot to ensure complete recovery. Average recovery time is six weeks.

What exercises should I do?

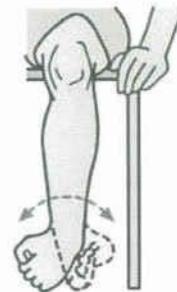
- Exercise for 10 minutes every hour when possible. Exercise will stop the ankle becoming stiff, weak or prone to 'giving way';
- The more exercise is done the better the outcome.

Exercises

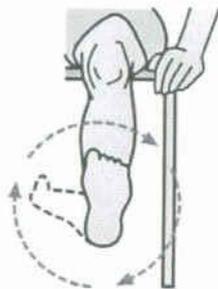
Exercise 1. Bend and straighten your ankles, that is, point your toes away from the body as far as possible, then back towards the body. Repeat 10 times.



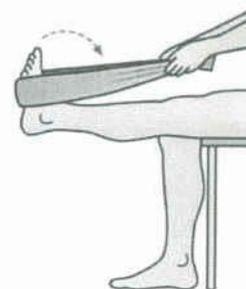
Exercise 2. Sit with your foot on the floor. Raise the inner border of your foot (big toe) first and then the outer border (little toe). Repeat 10 times.



Exercise 3. Rotate your foot in a circle. Change direction and repeat 10 times in each direction. Try writing your name with your big toe by only moving your ankle.



Exercise 4. Sit with one leg straight out in front of you. Put a band or towel around your foot and gently pull towards you until you first feel the stretch in your calf. Hold for 30 seconds. Also do this exercise with your knee bent. Repeat in both positions.



Patient Information

When to seek medical advice:

- Swelling or pain is increasing;
- There is no improvement after a few days, as your child may require Physiotherapy.

For further advice/information:

- Call NHS 111 (24 hours a day)
- Contact your GP
- Contact the Paediatric Department on 024 7696 6934

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format please contact 024 7696 6934 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

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Document History

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