



Trauma and Orthopaedics

Discharge advice - fibula avulsion fracture



You have broken (fractured) your outside ankle bone (fibula) where a small piece of bone has been pulled off the end. This is known as an avulsion fracture.

This takes approximately 6 to 8 weeks to heal, although pain and swelling can continue for 3 to 6 months. You can walk on the foot as comfort allows although you may find it easier to walk with crutches in the early stages. The swelling is often worse at the end of the day. Elevating your foot will help.

If you have been given a walking boot to wear, it is for your comfort only and is not needed to aid healing.



Patient Information

Initial advice

Painkillers

You should have been advised about painkillers. We recommend that you take these regularly for the first few days, both for your comfort and to enable you to move the ankle.

Rest

We recommend relative rest for the first 24 hours but this does not mean keeping the injured part completely still. If you do not move the injured limb, it will become stiffer and more painful.

We do not routinely follow-up patients with this type of injury.

However, please contact us after 8 weeks if you are:

- still experiencing significant pain and swelling
- struggling to wean out of the boot

Our telephone number is on page 5 of this leaflet.

Please follow this rehabilitation plan

Weeks since injury	Rehabilitation plan
0 to 2	If supplied, wear the boot for walking. You can wear it at night; however, this is up to you. It is fine to remove the boot to wash and air the foot when not walking. Begin the 'initial exercises'. If necessary, wean yourself off the crutches as able.
2 to 4	Try to wean yourself out of the boot and walk without crutches. Try walking around the house first.
4 to 6	You should now be out of the boot all the time. Continue elevation if swelling is still present.
6 to 12	The fracture is now healed. You can resume normal activity but be governed by pain and swelling you are experiencing. You should be able to carry out day-to-day activities, although arduous tasks or long walks may cause discomfort and swelling.

Patient Information

Ice packs

For the first 24 hours you should treat the injured part with relative rest and apply ice packs.

Wrap the ice / ice pack / bag frozen peas in a damp cloth then apply to the injured area. Repeat this every one to four hours during the first couple of days.

Do not leave the icepack on for longer than 20 minutes at a time.

Rest and elevation

Try to rest the foot for the first 24 to 72 hours to allow the early stage of healing to begin. Elevate your ankle above the level of your hips to reduce swelling. You can use pillows or a stool to keep your foot up.

Stop smoking

Smoking reduces the ability of the body to heal itself and can delay or prevent your fracture from healing. It can also increase the risk of an infection by suppressing your body's immune system.

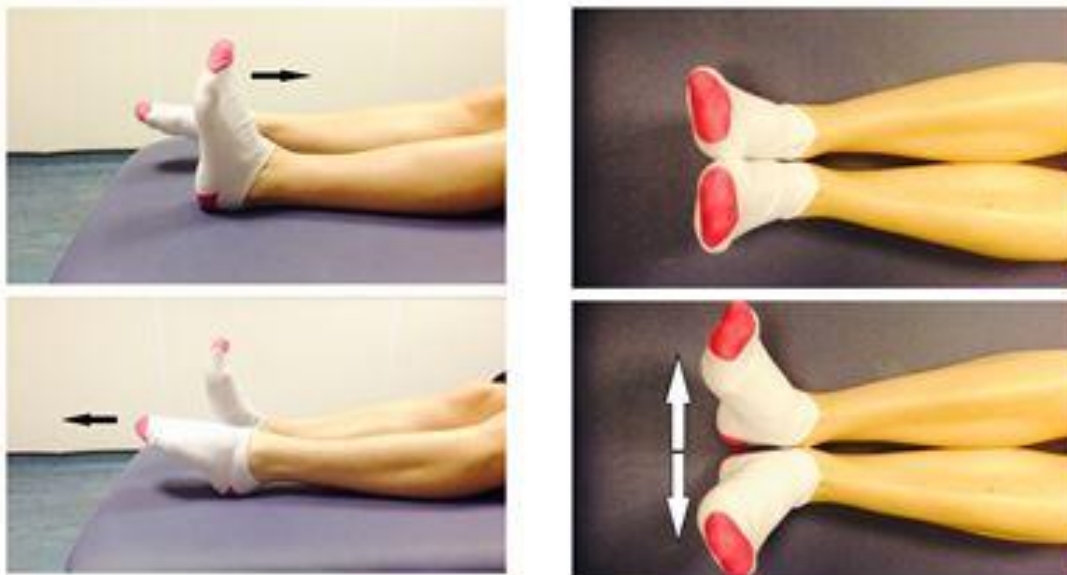
Early movement and exercise

Early movement of the ankle and foot is important to reduce stiffness. Early weight bearing (putting weight through injured foot) helps to increase the speed of healing. Try to walk as normally as possible as this will help your recovery.

Patient Information

Initial exercises to start straight away (3 to 4 times a day)

1. Point your injured foot up and down, within comfortable range of movement.
2. Keeping heels together, move your toes apart.



Exercises from 2 weeks onwards

1. Sit with your injured leg straight out in front of you. Put a towel/bandage around your foot and pull it towards you. Feel a stretch in the back of your calf.



2. Balance work (for those who could stand on one leg before injury) – holding a firm surface, attempt to stand on one (your injured) leg. Hold for 30 seconds, making sure it does not induce pain. Once this is pain free, try without holding on to a firm surface. Hold for 30 seconds.

Patient Information

Should you have any worries or concerns following discharge from hospital, please contact:

Virtual Fracture Clinic Hotline: 024 7696 9237

(Monday to Friday, 9am to 4pm)

We are unable to take calls while our clinic is running, but you can leave a voicemail. Please leave a voicemail with your full name and phone number and we will return your call.

For emergencies outside of these hours, please attend A&E.

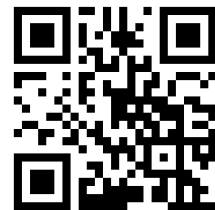
The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this Information in another language or format, please contact **024 7696 9237** and we will do our best to meet your needs.

The Trust operates a smoke free policy.

Did we get it right?

We would like you to tell us what you think about our services. This helps us make further improvements and recognise members of staff who provide a good service.

Have your say. Scan the QR code or visit:
www.uhcw.nhs.uk/feedback



Images used in this leaflet are reproduced by permission of [Virtual Fracture Clinic](#), Brighton & Sussex University Hospital Trust.

Document History

Department:	Trauma and Orthopaedics
Contact:	29237
Updated:	June 2023
Review:	June 2026
Version:	1.2
Reference:	HIC/LFT/2498/20