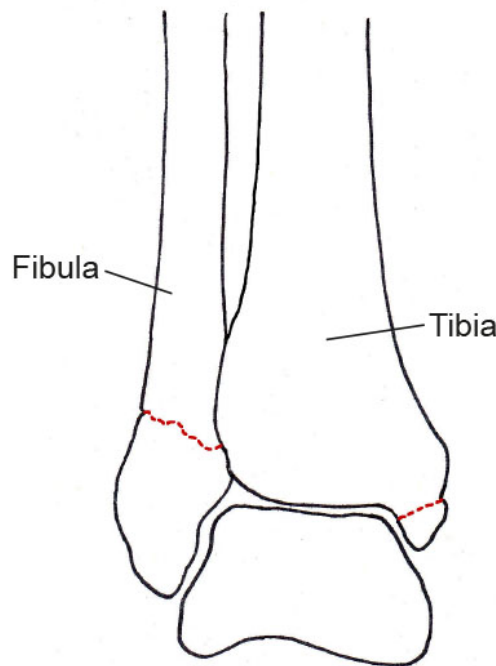


Physiotherapy Following an Ankle Fracture

What is an ankle fracture?

- A fracture is the same as a break.
- It normally involves the Fibula and sometimes the Tibia.



How is it treated?

Plaster	Surgery
<p>Your ankle may need to be manipulated into the correct position first.</p> <p>You will usually be in plaster for approximately four to six weeks.</p> <p><i>(Whilst the plaster is on it is important to keep your toes and knee moving)</i></p>	<p>The ends of the bone are held in place with pins and plates.</p>

Common symptoms after the plaster has been removed and what you can do to help

Pain or discomfort

- It is normal to get some pain after your fracture. This may be due to stiffness and swelling, which is a natural part of the healing process.
- You may have been given pain relief; if so you should take it as prescribed.
- If you have not, please seek the advice of a pharmacist/GP regarding the use of simple pain relief medication, if required.

Swelling

- Swelling often increases once the plaster has been removed.
- Completing your exercises and walking, as pain allows, will also help to reduce swelling.
- Try the following to minimise swelling:
 - ✓ Elevate your foot when resting.
 - ✓ At night, rest your foot on some pillows so that it lies above the level of your heart.
 - ✓ Apply ice to the area(s) for 10 - 15 minutes to help reduce any inflammation and soreness. A bag of ice/frozen peas wrapped in a damp towel is ideal.
CAUTION – direct contact of ice on the skin can cause burns. It is normal for the skin to become pink with either heat or ice, however if you experience discomfort or a burning sensation, please remove the item immediately. Please be aware that if you have circulatory problems, poor skin sensation or if you have diabetic neuropathy, please do not apply heat or cold to the affected area. Please seek medical advice if you feel at all unsure, or have any questions.

Stiffness

- Stiffness occurs whenever any part of the body is held in the same position for a period of time.
- It is important to keep your ankle mobile after your plaster has been removed. Little and often is best.
- Completing your exercises and walking, as pain allows, will help to reduce stiffness.

Weakness

- Weakness is due to the lack of muscle use whilst the ankle has been in the plaster.
- You should gradually increase your level of activity, as pain allows, to help improve your strength.

Dry skin/excessive hair growth

- Wash your leg with warm water and use a basic moisturiser.
- Hair darkening and growth is normal after your plaster has been removed and will reduce in time.

If you notice increasing skin sensitivity and increasing stiffness despite regular exercises – please seek medical advice.

Frequently asked questions (FAQs)

- **How long should I expect to feel symptoms for?**

You may experience some swelling and discomfort for up to one year post-fracture. This is normal and does not mean there is anything to worry about.

- **Why does my ankle look a funny shape?**

As a fracture heals, new bone is formed which will join the broken ends together. This can result in a lump forming on the side of your ankle. This is normal and will usually reduce with time. Following a severe fracture, however, your ankle may not go back to looking exactly the same as it did before the fracture.

- **When can I start driving?**

You can usually return to driving once you have sufficient movement and strength to control the pedals and you are able to perform an emergency stop. This will vary between individuals, but is approximately six to eight weeks after your plaster has been removed. Seek advice from your insurance company if you are unsure.

- **Should I stop my exercises if my ankle swells or aches?**

It is normal to experience a slight increase in swelling or soreness when exercising. If you are experiencing high levels of pain, you may be doing too much. Ensure you are managing your symptoms (i.e. ice, elevation, simple medication, exercise/rest), but speak to a healthcare professional if you are experiencing high levels of pain.

- **How will I know when I can walk without my crutches?**

When your plaster is removed, your consultant will tell you when you are allowed to put weight through your foot; you can then begin to gradually put more weight through your foot as pain allows.

What exercises can I do to help?

Early exercises - To be commenced once the plaster is removed.
Complete the exercises as pain allows, in a slow and controlled manner.
If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the physiotherapy department.



Lying on your back or sitting.
Bend and straighten your ankles.
Hold for 5 seconds in each position.
Keep your knees straight throughout the exercise.

**Repeat x 10-15,
as pain allows**



Lying on your back or sitting.
Move your ankle around slowly in a large circle.
Repeat in the opposite direction.

**Repeat x 10-15,
as pain allows**



Sitting on a chair.
Alternately raise your heels and toes.

**Repeat x 10-15,
as pain and
fatigue allows**



Sitting on chair.
Cross the ankle to be stretched over the knee.
Place your hand on top of your foot and stretch your ankle (point toes).
Feel the stretch in your shin.
Hold 10 seconds - as pain allows.

**Repeat x 10,
as pain allows**



Sit with one leg straight out in front of you.
Put a towel round your foot.
Gently pull the towel and feel the stretch in your calf.
Hold 10 seconds - as pain allows.

**Repeat x 10,
as pain allows**

Intermediate exercises

Note:

Only start these exercises if your consultant is happy for you to put full weight on your foot.



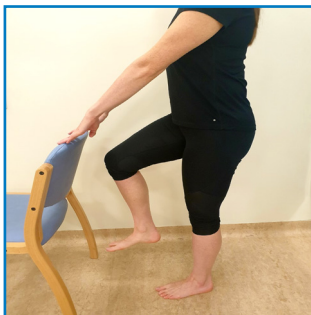
In sitting, cross your feet and put the outer edges of your little toes together. Press the outer edges of the toes together. Hold for 5 seconds.

Repeat x 10, as pain and fatigue allows



In sitting, put the inner edges of your big toes together. Press the inner edges of your big toes together. Hold for 5 seconds.

Repeat x 10, as pain and fatigue allows



Stand holding on to a support. Transfer your weight onto your affected leg and lift the other leg off the floor. Try maintaining your balance for 15-30 seconds.

Repeat as pain and fatigue allows



Place your hands on a wall and step your affected leg backwards. Bend the front knee and keep the back leg straight. Ensure your toes are pointing forward. Lean your body forwards to the wall, ensuring the back leg stays straight and the heel stays on the floor. You should feel a stretch in your calf. Hold for 10 seconds.

Repeat x 10, as pain allows



Stand holding onto a support. Keeping your knees straight, push up onto your toes, then slowly lower back down.

Repeat x 10, as pain and fatigue allows

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Scan the QR code below to take you to our website.



Web Address:

<http://www.cht.nhs.uk/services/clinical-services/physiotherapy-outpatients/patient-careinformation/>

If you have any comments about this leaflet or the service you have received you can contact :

Physiotherapy Department
Huddersfield Royal Infirmary

Telephone: 01484 342434
Booking Office: 01484 905380

www.cht.nhs.uk

If you would like this information in another format or language contact the above.

Potřebujete-li tyto informace v jiném formátu nebo jazyce, obraťte se prosím na výše uvedené oddělení

Jeżeli są Państwo zainteresowani otrzymaniem tych informacji w innym formacie lub wersji językowej, prosimy skontaktować się z nami, korzystając z ww. danych kontaktowych

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برائے مہربانی مندرجہ بالا شعبے میں ہم سے رابطہ کریں۔

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