

Ankle Sprain: Rehab Exercises

Introduction

Here are some examples of exercises for you to try. The exercises may be suggested for a condition or for rehabilitation. Start each exercise slowly. Ease off the exercises if you start to have pain.

You will be told when to start these exercises and which ones will work best for you.

How to do the exercises

Ankle alphabet



slide 1 of 10

1. Sit in a chair with your feet flat on the floor. (You can also do this exercise lying on your back with your affected leg propped up on a pillow).
2. Lift the heel of your affected foot off the floor, and slowly trace the letters of the alphabet.
3. It's a good idea to repeat these steps with your other foot.

Side-to-side knee swing



slide 2 of 10

1. Sit in a chair with your affected foot flat on the floor.
2. Slowly move your knee from side to side. Keep your foot pressed flat.
3. Continue this exercise for 2 to 3 minutes.
4. It's a good idea to repeat these steps with your other foot.

Towel curl



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slide 3 of 10

1. While sitting, place your foot on a towel on the floor. Scrunch the towel toward you with your toes.
2. Then use your toes to push the towel away from you.
3. To make this exercise more challenging you can put something on the other end of the towel. A can of soup is about the right weight for this.

Towel stretch



slide 4 of 10

1. Sit with your legs extended and knees straight.
2. Place a towel around your foot just under the toes.
3. Hold each end of the towel in each hand, with your hands above your knees.
4. Pull back with the towel so that your foot stretches toward you.
5. Hold the position for at least 15 to 30 seconds.
6. Repeat 2 to 4 times a session. Do up to 5 sessions a day.

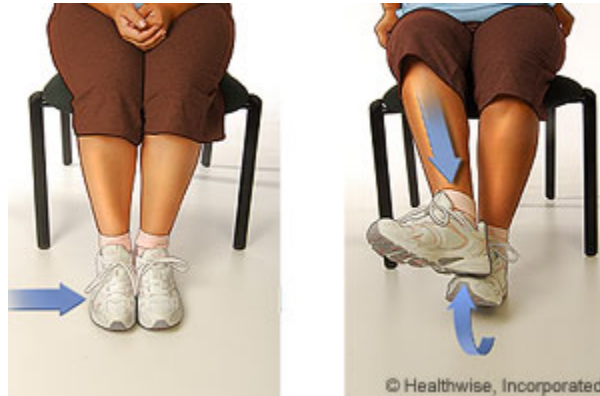
Ankle eversion exercise



slide 5 of 10

1. Start by sitting with your foot flat on the floor. Push your foot outward against a wall or a piece of furniture that doesn't move. Hold for about 6 seconds, and relax. Repeat 8 to 12 times.
2. After you feel comfortable with this, try using rubber tubing looped around the outside of your feet for resistance. Push your foot out to the side against the tubing, and then count to 10 as you slowly bring your foot back to the middle. Repeat 8 to 12 times.

Isometric opposition exercises



slide 6 of 10

1. While sitting, put your feet together flat on the floor.
2. Press your injured foot inward against your other foot. Hold for about 6 seconds, and relax. Repeat 8 to 12 times.
3. Then place the heel of your other foot on top of the injured one. Push down with the top heel while trying to push up with your injured foot. Hold for about 6 seconds, and relax. Repeat 8 to 12 times.

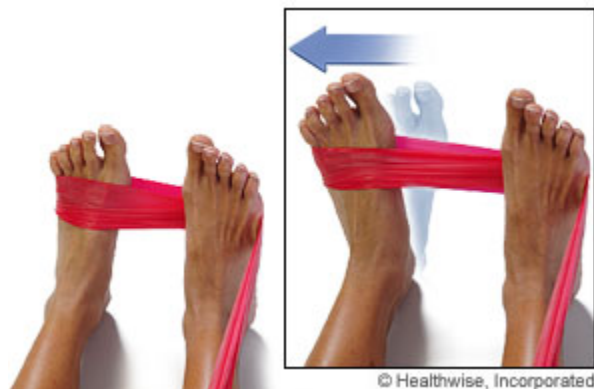
Resisted ankle inversion



slide 7 of 10

1. Sit on the floor with your good leg crossed over your other leg.
2. Hold both ends of an exercise band and loop the band around the inside of your affected foot. Then press your other foot against the band.
3. Keeping your legs crossed, slowly push your affected foot against the band so that foot moves away from your other foot. Then slowly relax.
4. Repeat 8 to 12 times.

Resisted ankle eversion



slide 8 of 10

1. Sit on the floor with your legs straight.
2. Hold both ends of an exercise band and loop the band around the outside of your affected foot. Then press your other foot against the band.
3. Keeping your leg straight, slowly push your affected foot outward against the band and away from your other foot without letting your leg rotate. Then slowly relax.
4. Repeat 8 to 12 times.

Resisted ankle dorsiflexion



slide 9 of 10

1. Tie the ends of an exercise band together to form a loop. Attach one end of the loop to a secure object or shut a door on it to hold it in place. (Or you can have someone hold one end of the loop to provide resistance.)
2. While sitting on the floor or in a chair, loop the other end of the band over the top of your affected foot.
3. Keeping your knee and leg straight, slowly flex your foot to pull back on the exercise band, and then slowly relax.
4. Repeat 8 to 12 times.

Single-leg balance



slide 10 of 10

1. Stand on a flat surface with your arms stretched out to your sides like you are making the letter "T." Then lift your good leg off the floor, bending it at the knee. If you are not steady on your feet, use one hand to hold on to a chair, counter, or wall.
2. Standing on the leg with your affected ankle, keep that knee straight. Try to balance on that leg for up to 30 seconds. Then rest for up to 10 seconds.
3. Repeat 6 to 8 times.
4. When you can balance on your affected leg for 30 seconds with your eyes open, try to balance on it with your eyes closed.
5. When you can do this exercise with your eyes closed for 30 seconds and with ease and no pain, try standing on a pillow or piece of foam, and repeat steps 1 through 4.

Follow-up care is a key part of your treatment and safety. Be sure to make and go to all appointments, and call your doctor if you are having problems. It's also a good idea to know your test results and keep a list of the medicines you take.

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