

Exercises for the injured ankle

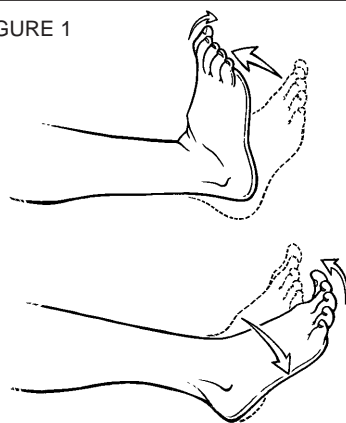
PATIENT INFORMATION FROM YOUR DOCTOR

It's important to get care from a doctor when you have an ankle injury that causes pain or doesn't get better. But it's just as important to exercise the ankle to help you become active again.

The ground rules

- Do only the exercises your doctor checks off.
- Exercise in your bare feet or in stocking feet.
- Count slowly (one thousand one, one thousand two, etc.) when you must hold a position and count.
- Do each exercise 10 times the first day, and increase the repetitions by 5 each following day until you reach a maximum of 30— unless your doctor tells you otherwise. Continue doing 30 repetitions after that.
- Go through the program 3 times a day.
- Do each exercise slowly, and try to get the greatest stretch possible.
- Do not continue with any exercise that causes new, unusual, or intense pain.

FIGURE 1



Toe and foot bends (floor)

Sit on the floor or a bed with your legs out straight. Bend your injured foot back toward your head, and curl up your toes at the same time. Then point your foot away and bend your toes back (see Figure 1).

Toe raise/foot slide


Sit in a chair with your knees bent at a right angle and your feet flat on the floor. Raise all your toes on the injured foot, and slide the foot back 3-4 inches (see Figure 2). Relax your toes. Raise the toes again, and slide your foot back another 3-4 inches. Relax your toes again. Keep up the sliding and toe-raising until you can no longer keep your heel on the floor. 

FIGURE 2

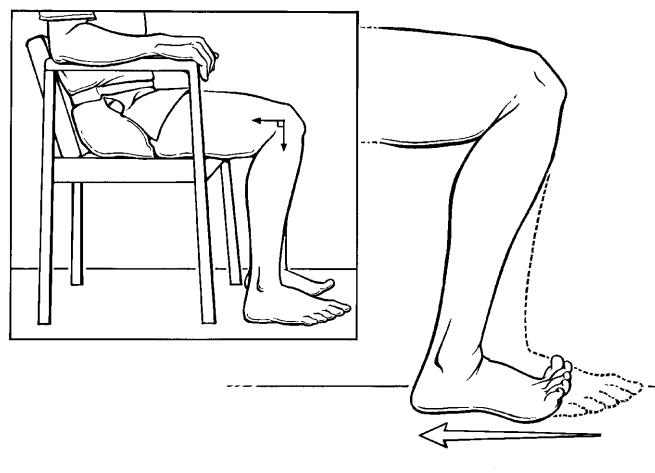
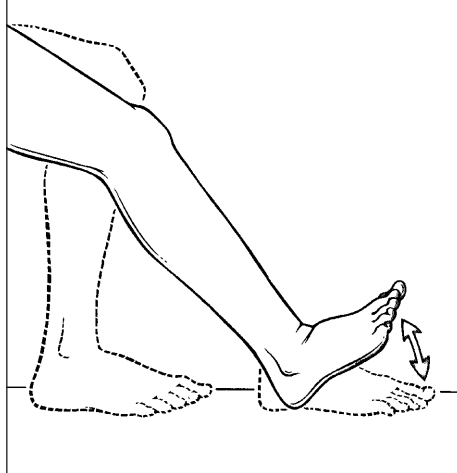


FIGURE 3



Exercises for the injured ankle continued

Toe and foot bends (chair)

Sit in a chair with your knees bent at a right angle and your feet flat on the floor. Slide the foot on the injured side forward as far as you can while keeping your toes and heel in contact with the floor. From this straight-leg position, bend your foot toward your head as far as you can (see Figure 3, page 149). Lower your foot back onto the floor. Keep bending your foot back and forth from the straight-leg position.

Heel cord stretch

Stand straight and face a wall with your feet together, your arms straight out, and your palms flat against the wall. Lean toward the wall, bending your elbows, to stretch the cords above your heels (see Figure 4). Continue leaning for a count of 5, and then straighten up again.

Inner-tube stretch (1)

Find a place to sit, such as at the side of a high bed, where you can dangle your feet. Hold your feet side by side at a right angle to your legs, and tie bicycle inner tubes—or stretch large rubber bands—around them so they are snug. Then, keeping your ankles together, move your toes as far apart as you can (see Figure 5). Hold the stretch for a count of 5.

Inner-tube stretch (2)

Find a place to sit where you can dangle your feet. Cross your feet at the ankles, and tie tubes or bands around your feet so that they are snug. Then move your toes as far apart as you can, holding the stretch for a count of 5 (see Figure 6).

Adapted with permission from Torg JS, Vegso JJ, Torg E: *Rehabilitation of Athletic Injuries: An Atlas of Therapeutic Exercise*. Chicago, Year Book Medical Publishers, 1987, pp 46-47, 50-51.

FIGURE 4

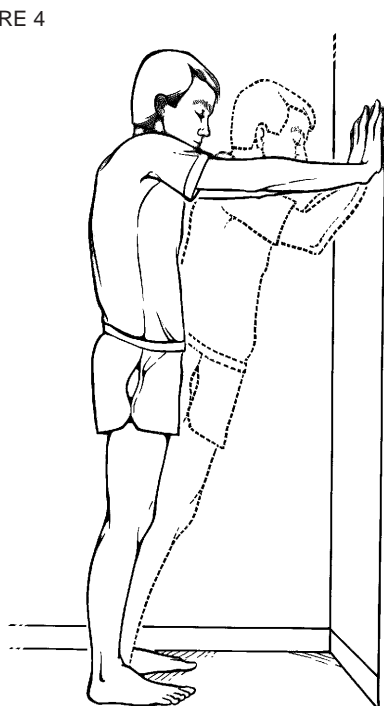


FIGURE 5

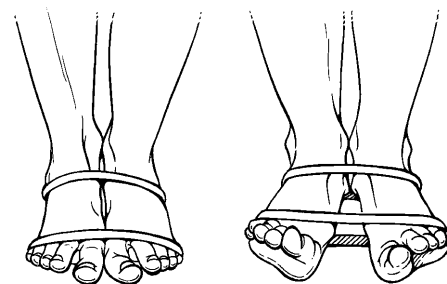


FIGURE 6

