



# Exercise guide

## Ankle

Throughout the following exercises, the emphasis is on slow, controlled movement.

If you are currently receiving physiotherapy only do the exercises that your therapist has prescribed under your current treatment plan.

When carrying out the exercises make sure you are safe and stable, using support of counters or tables if needed. Make sure all exercises are pain free and if they cause pain stop doing them or go to an easier exercise. Do not exert yourself beyond your own capabilities.

### **Ankle range of movement – sitting**

- Start seated with your affected leg in front of you and heel resting on the floor or a small stool
- Ensure you keep your leg still from the ankle up throughout this whole exercise
- Leading with your toes slowly point the foot away from you as far as comfortable before bringing back toward you
- Repeat this 10 times
- Then, maintaining the position of the ankle, turn the foot so the sole faces toward the opposite side
- Return to the start position and repeat 10 times
- Follow this by repeating the movement to the opposite direction and again repeating 10 times
- Finally rotate the whole foot by drawing an imaginary circle with your big toe. Repeat 10 times clockwise then anticlockwise
- This can be progressed by writing your name or the alphabet by leading the movement with your big toe

Complete three sets of 10 repetitions unless directed otherwise by your physiotherapist.

### **Ankle strengthening**

- This exercise is best performed sitting on a chair with your leg extended and heel resting on the floor. Alternatively it can be performed sitting on the floor or a bed with your back supported
- Securely hook an exercise band underneath your foot while holding the other end in your hand
- Take up the tension in the band then slowly push the foot away from you
- Hold for three seconds before slowly controlling to the start position
- Repeat this exercise 10 times



- Following this securely fix a resistance band to a solid object and then to your foot
- Ensure the ankle position is maintained so only the foot moves and slowly turn the sole of the foot one way
- Repeat 10 times before relocating the band and repeating but in the opposite direction

Complete three sets of 10 repetitions unless directed otherwise by your physiotherapist.

### **Calf stretch**

- Take a step forward with your non-affected side
- Keeping the back heel on the floor and the toes pointed forward slowly lean forwards until you feel a stretch through the calf
- If you find it easier you can use a wall or chair to lean on for support
- Hold this stretch and avoid bouncing at the end of range

Complete three sets of 10 repetitions, holding for 10-15 seconds unless directed otherwise by your physiotherapist.

### **Calf strengthening**

- Stand with your feet shoulder width apart and the toes pointed forward
- Slowly push up on to your toes, hold for three seconds and slowly control the movement down to the starting position
- Repeat the above with your toes pointing inwards then outwards
- If you find it easier you can use a wall or chair to lean on for support
- To progress this exercise you can place increased weight on one side or perform a single leg heel raise

Complete three sets of 10 repetitions unless directed otherwise by your physiotherapist.

### **Ankle range of movement – dorsiflexion in standing with chair**

- Stand facing a chair
- Place affected foot flat on the chair and slowly lean forward so that your knee passes the ankle
- Continue to lean forward as far as comfortable or until you feel your heel start to rise up
- Return to the starting position and repeat this movement

Complete three sets of 10 repetitions unless directed otherwise by your physiotherapist.

### **Proprioception – single leg stance**

- Stand with feet shoulder width apart
- Ensure your pelvis is kept level and slowly raise one knee up to 90 degrees
- Hold your balance and stretch your arms out if required
- This can be progressed by taking the arms in front, above and to the side while holding balance on a single leg or taking the non-standing leg out to the side and in front of you



- Further progressions can include holding your balance while closing your eyes or throwing and catching a ball
- If you have difficulty initially it can be useful to perform this exercise in front of a long mirror or chair for support

Complete three sets of 10 repetitions unless directed otherwise by your physiotherapist.

### **Jogging on the Spot – 1, 2, 3 holds**

- Start with feet a shoulder width apart
- Lift one knee to around 90 degrees
- Try to prevent your pelvis from tilting
- Slowly preform a small hop and control the landing
- Return to start position with a level pelvis and knee at 90 degrees before repeating
- This can be progressed by hopping forward, backward and to either side always return to the starting point

Complete three sets of 10 repetitions unless directed otherwise by your physiotherapist.

### **Single leg hopping**

- Start with one foot a stride length in front of the other and upper body upright
- Slowly dip until both knees are around 90 degrees, control the movement back to the starting position
- Ensure you keep your chin up and don't look down during the exercise
- Repeat with the legs reversed
- This can be progressed by increasing the length of hold or holding weights

Complete three sets of 10 repetitions unless directed otherwise by your physiotherapist.