

# Ankle Sprains

## Information for Patients



**This leaflet has been written to give you the right information about ankle sprain and what you can do to help with your recovery.**

### What is an ankle sprain?

An ankle sprain is an injury that can happen when your ankle is forced into a position that puts stress and strain through the ligaments (as well as other structures), to the point that they are upset.

### What are the common symptoms?

**Pain:** Some ankle sprains can be really sore and some might not be. Whatever discomfort you may or may not experience with an ankle sprain, it is quite normal for it to still be with you for days, sometimes a few weeks after the initial injury.

**Swelling/bruising:** After an ankle sprain, it is very likely your ankle will swell, it may even bruise. You might find the swelling lasts for a long time and it may even still be there when the pain has settled and you are feeling better, but this doesn't necessarily mean anything is wrong, it is just what seems to happen.

**Difficulty walking:** It may be sore to use your foot or you may feel worried about taking weight through it when walking but as things settle, it is likely that this will ease and return to what is normal for you.

**Not trusting it:** You might not feel confident to use your foot or may feel that it will let you down or that you might injure it again. This is very normal and regaining trust and confidence in your ankle is an important part of your rehabilitation.

### What can I do to help myself?

**Calm it down:** Calming it down simply means looking at the things it doesn't like and trying to make some adjustments or changes to make it easier for yourself.

For example, you might find that spending a long time on your feet or wearing certain types of shoes might be sore. By taking breaks when you're standing for a long time or choosing footwear that your ankle is happy with, may help calm it down whilst it is still a problem.

**Pain control:** Applying something warm/cold around your ankle may be useful in helping with some of the pain (do remember to wrap your hot water bottle/cold pack in a towel before applying it to your skin to avoid burns).

**Build it back up again:** Movement is medicine for your body and your ankle is no different. Calming the issue down (as described above) is often the best place to start and sometimes this might take a few weeks to help. Once your ankle feels a little calmer, it is a good idea to start to 'build it back up again'. What this means is that once the ankle is able to tolerate some gentle exercise, then it is worth starting some.

### Will it get better?

For most people, an ankle sprain will not be a pleasant experience but reassuringly, it does have the potential to get better. By understanding the issue as best you can and by adjusting what is sore to then allow you to explore some exercise/s, is often the best formula for success.

If you would like to know more about ankle sprains or find a greater choice of exercises, you can explore our dedicated webpage.

**Search online:** [Norfolk and Waveney MSK services](#) 'ankle sprains'

# Exercises



Sitting with a scarf or band around your foot. Pull your toes up towards you and pull on the ends of the scarf/band to increase this stretch.

Complete little and often throughout the day.



Sitting with a scarf or band around your foot. Cross the end of the scarf/band over in your hand. Turn your foot outwards or inwards and pull on the end of the scarf/band that increases this movement.

Complete little and often throughout the day.



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