

Rehabilitating Ankle Sprains

Exercise 1. The “alphabets” While seated with the edge of the heel on the floor, patients Draw the entire alphabet one letter at a time by moving the injured ankle and using the great toe as the pen.

Figure 1

Windshield wiper. Sit with foot flat on the floor and facing straight ahead. Rotate the affected foot to mimic a windshield wiper blade: Pivot the foot outward and touch the inside edge of the foot to the floor (A), then rotate it inward and touch the outside of the foot to the floor (B).



Figure 2

Seated calf rise. Sit with the injured foot flat on the floor. Lift the heel as far as possible while keeping the toes on the floor.



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Figure 3

Single-leg stands (partial weight bearing). Stand while placing one hand on a table. Shift some of the weight to the injured foot for 15 seconds. Increase the time spent on the injured foot by 15 seconds until you can stand for 45 seconds. Then gradually increase the amount of weight supported by the injured foot until full body weight is used.



Figure 4

Eversion and inversion isometrics. Eversion (A): Stand and place the outside of the injured foot against a table leg or door jamb. Push outward with the foot for 2 to 3 seconds. Inversion (B): Stand with the inside of your foot against the table leg or door jamb and push inward for 2 to 3 seconds.

A



B



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Figure 5 Exercise band eversion and inversion. Eversion: Sit with the involved leg straight. Tie a loop in an elastic exercise band and attach the other end to a heavy object such as a table leg. Place the loop around the ball of the foot (A). Rotate (evert) the foot away from the table leg and return it to starting position (1 repetition). Do not rotate the leg to do exercise. Inversion (B): Reverse the position of the exercise band and rotate (invert) the foot inward, away from the table leg. Once patients can do group 1 exercise they can progress to group 2.

A



B



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Group 2 Exercises

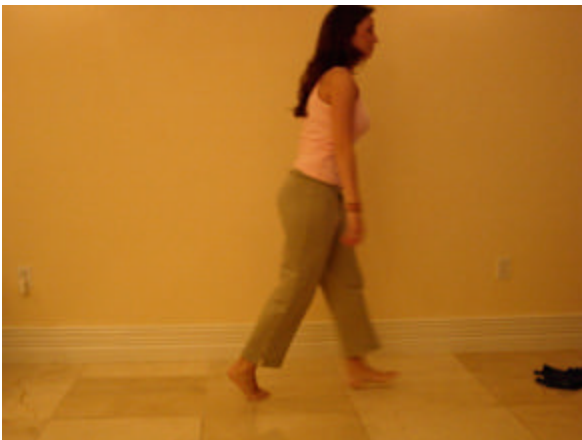
Figure 6

Gastrocnemius stretch. Place the injured foot behind the uninjured foot and keep the back of the knee straight. With the heel firmly planted on the floor, lean forward into a wall so that you can feel a stretch in the calf farthest from the wall. Hold for 30 seconds.



Figure 7

Soleus stretch. Stand with the injured foot in front of the other foot. Bend the knee of the back foot and lower your body toward the floor without letting the back heel rise off the floor. You should feel the stretch in the lower calf of the back leg.



Group 2 Exercise

Figure 8

Full weight-bearing single-leg stand and standing calf raised. Stand with the injured foot on the floor and the other leg bent at the knee and off the floor (as shown for the standing calf raised). Maintain full weight on injured leg for 30 seconds. Standing calf raise. Raise up on the ball of the injured foot then return the heel to the floor. Weight is supported only on the injured side.



Figure 9

Single-leg stand with a towel. Roll a towel into a strip 4 inches wide, 1 to 2 inches high, and 12 to 18 inches long. Stand with the injured ankle on the towel as shown the single-leg stand figure 3. Hold for 30 seconds.



Group 3 Exercises

Figure 10. Lateral step and lateral bound. Step: Place a rolled towel on the ground and stand with both feet to one side of the towel (A). Step over the towel with the injured ankle (B), and remain on one foot (C). Reverse the process and step over the towel in the opposite direction. Increase speed as pain will allow. Bound: The starting position is the same as for the step. With both feet on one side of the towel, hop over the towel and land on the right foot. Then, hop back over the towel and land on the left foot. Gradually increase speed and height of bound as comfort allows.

A.



B.



C.

