

Patient information

Foot and ankle surgery - recovery

Advice for patients after surgery

This leaflet will provide you with advice to help your recovery. It is a guide only and the therapy you need may vary.

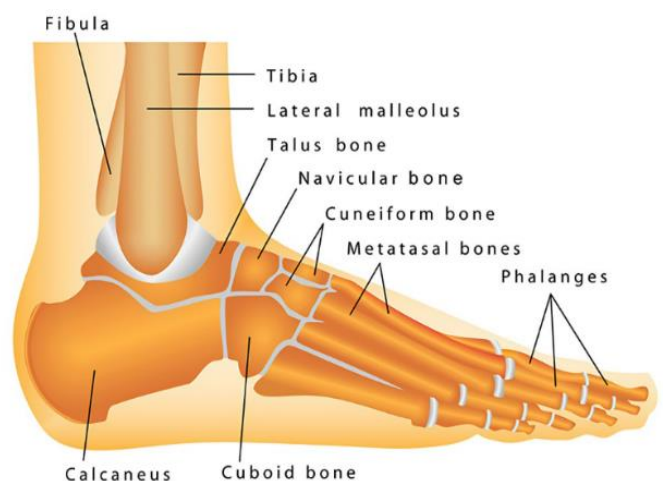
You play a very important role in your own recovery, so it is important you follow the advice we give you.

If you need clarification of information, or have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask a member of the team. There is a list of contact details provided at the back of the leaflet.

Important advice following your surgery

This advice is to reduce swelling, minimise pain and enhance recovery

- Keep your foot elevated (higher than your hip) when you are not mobilising. Put your operated limb on pillows when lying down in bed and elevated on a foot stool when in sitting. You need to do this for at least the first 7 - 10 days.
- Ice is beneficial for temporary pain relief, the management of swelling and inflammation once your bandage has been reduced. You can apply ice to the area of your surgery for 20 minutes, ensuring it is wrapped in a damp towel. Look after your skin when using ice. If it remains red and sore following ice therapy, cease use and seek medical advice.
- Continue taking your pain relief as prescribed by your doctor.



Weight bearing status

Your Orthopaedic Surgeon will advise on a weight bearing status following your surgery and it will be one of the following. The team will ensure you are told what your weight bearing status is and how long you should adhere to this.

- Full weight bearing** – No restrictions. You are able to weight bear through the affected limb as much as able.
- Partial weight bearing** – 50% weight bearing through your operated limb with the use of walking aids. You will be guided by the therapy team.
- Toe-touch weight bearing** – You are able to rest your toes to the ground only. There is no loading through the limb. The therapy team will guide you further with this.
- Non-weight bearing** – Your operated leg is not allowed to touch the ground. You will use walking aids to assist with mobilisation and will be guided by the therapy team.
- Heel weight bearing** – Your weight is through your heel only, keeping toes off the ground. You will be provided with a heel weight bearing shoe and walking aids for mobilisation and will be guided by the therapy team.

Orthotics

You may be required to wear one of the following shoes to support your recovery following your surgery. The therapy team will provide you with the appropriate shoe.

- Post-operative shoe**



- Heel weight bearing shoe**



- Walker boot**



Plaster cast

Depending on the type of foot and ankle surgery you are having, you may require a cast. It is important that you look after your cast as it is an essential part of your treatment.

Do not:

- ✗ Let your plaster cast get wet
- ✗ Cut or bend the plaster cast
- ✗ Poke anything down the plaster cast
- ✗ Remove any of the padding

Please telephone if your plaster cast:

- -feels tight, is rubbing and causing you discomfort
- -cracks or breaks
- -becomes loose, so it is no longer supporting your limb
- -it gets wet
- -or you just need advice

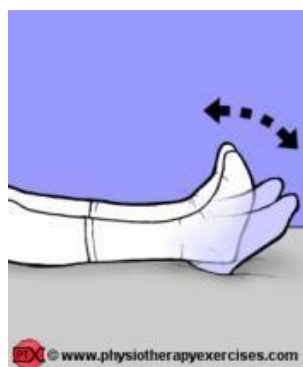
Home exercise programme

Please complete the exercises that the therapy team have given to you. These exercises will be ticked. If you are unsure, please ask.

The exercises should be completed in a smooth and controlled manner. Stop the exercise if you feel unable to complete it safely. You should stop exercising if you have increased pain not eased by rest / pain relief or ice therapy and seek medical advice.

Exercises are to be completed three times per day.

Circulation exercise



Lying or sitting

Wiggle your toes for a period of 15 seconds

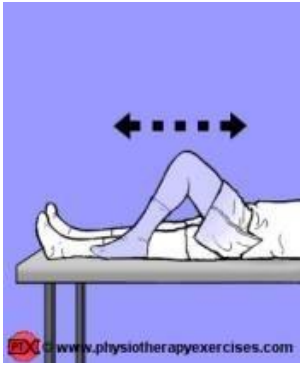
Repeat 5 times

If able (not in a cast or bandaging around ankle), pump your ankles up and down for a period of 15 seconds

Repeat 5 times



Hip and knee flexion in lying



Lying in bed

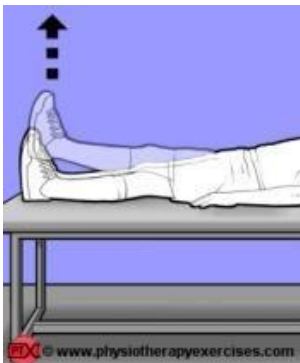
Slide your foot up the bed to bend your knee and hip

Slowly straighten your leg back to the bed

Repeat 10 times on each side



Straight leg raises in lying



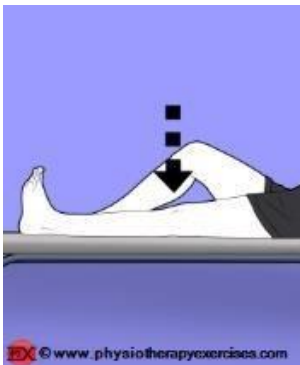
Lying in bed

Keeping your whole leg straight, raise your whole leg off the bed, hold for 3 seconds and then slowly lower your leg back to the bed

Repeat 10 times on each side



Static quads in lying



Lying in bed

Tighten your thigh muscle pushing your knee down into the bed

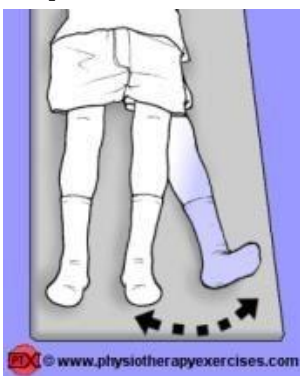
Hold for 5 seconds

Relax

Repeat 10 times on each side



Hip abduction in lying



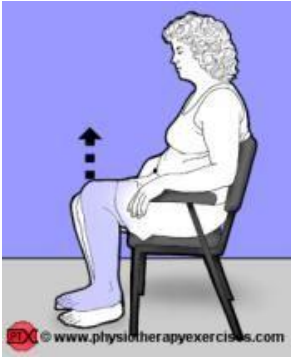
Lying in bed

Slide your leg out to the side, then back to the middle

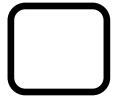
Repeat 10 times on each side



Seated marching



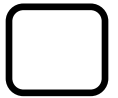
Sitting in a chair, with a good posture
March your legs up and down
Complete this for 20 seconds, at a good pace if you can
Rest for 20 seconds, then repeat x 2



Knee extension in sitting



Sitting in a chair, with a good posture
Straighten your leg
Hold for 2 – 3 seconds, then slowly lower
Repeat 10 times on each side



Useful contact numbers

Ward F4 (elective surgical ward): 01284 713290

Day Surgery Unit: 01284 713050

Main hospital switchboard: 01284 713000

Surgical care practitioner helpline: 01284 713924

Orthopaedic physiotherapy department: 01284 713570

You can contact your consultant via the hospital switchboard if required 01284 713000.

If you would like any information regarding access to the West Suffolk Hospital and its facilities please visit the website for AccessAble (formerly DisabledGo)

<https://www.accessable.co.uk/organisations/west-suffolk-nhs-foundation-trust>



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