Ankle exercises
This booklet contains general information which cannot be construed as specific advice to an individual patient. All statements in the booklet must be interpreted by your personal physician/physiotherapist who has the knowledge of the stage and/or extent of your particular medical condition.

Physiotherapy Department
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Objectives

1. To improve mobility of the ankle joint.
2. To strengthen the ankle muscles.

If your ankle is swollen or painful before or after you exercise, apply ice on it for 10–12 minutes: with your leg elevated.

If your ankle feels stiff, a hot bath before exercising may help. (Precaution should be taken regarding the redness, swelling and healing of the incision).

Easy ice pack:

A 1 kg packet of unpopped corn kernels or peas, kept in freezer. To use, remove bag from freezer and wrap in a damp towel and apply to ankle for 10–12 minutes. Replace package in freezer until needed again.

N.B.: You can burn with ice as well as heat. If you feel any burning spots, check skin.

Guide to Theraband Resistance:

- **White:** Minimal resistance
- **Yellow:** Light resistance
- **Red:** Moderate resistance
- **Green:** Heavy resistance
- **Blue:** Extra Heavy resistance
- **Black:** Maximum resistance
Range of motion exercises

1. **Active ankle dorsiflexion and plantarflexion:**

   Relax leg keeping your knee straight. Gently move toes and foot upwards and downwards.  
   Repeat ____ times each direction _____ times /day.

2. **Active ankle inversion and eversion:**

   Relax leg keeping your knee straight. Gently turn your ankle and foot in and out.  
   Repeat _____ times each direction ____ times /day.
3. **Active ankle eversion and inversion:**

   **a) Eversion:**
   Lie on your _____ side. Bend the non-injured leg. Move the side of the foot up towards the ceiling. Keep the rest of the leg straight.
   Hold ____ seconds, repeat ____ times. Progress to putting weight on foot to increase strength.

   **b) Inversion:**
   Lie on your — side. Lift inside of foot up towards the ceiling.

4. **Active ankle dorsiflexion and plantarflexion**

   Sit with feet on the floor. Raise toes up keeping the heel on the floor. Raise heel up keeping the toes on the floor.
   Repeat ____ times each direction ____ times /day.
5. **Active ankle inversion and eversion:**

Sit with injured foot flat on a towel. Keep the knee facing forward. Turn foot in, gathering towel. Turn foot out, gathering towel.

Repeat ____ times each direction ____ times /day.

6. **Ankle circles:**

Make a circle with your ankle clockwise then change to counter clockwise.

Repeat ____ times each direction ____ times /day.
Ankle stretching exercises:

Non weight bearing:

In supine position

7. **Plantarflexor and dorsiflexor stretching:**

   Lying on your back, feet resting on a towel flat against the wall. Slide the foot downwards and upwards keeping the foot in contact with the wall at all times.

   Hold ____ seconds, repeat ____ times.

In sitting position

8. **Gastrocnemius and heel cord stretching:**

   Sitting with legs straight and a towel around the ball of the injured foot. Using towel, pull foot up. Keep the knee straight. A stretch will be felt behind the leg.

   Hold ____ seconds, repeat ____ times.
9. **Invertor stretching:**

   Sitting with legs straight and a towel around the ball of the injured foot. Using towel, pull foot out. Keep the knee straight. A stretch will be felt inside the ankle.

   Hold _____ seconds, repeat _____ times.

10. **Evertor stretching:**

    Sitting with legs straight and a towel around the ball of the injured foot. Using towel, pull foot in. Keep the knee straight. A stretch will be felt outside the ankle.

    Hold _____ seconds, repeat _____ times.

11. **Dorsiflexor stretching:**

    Sit on heels with the front of the foot in contact with the floor as much as possible. Keep the toes in line with the heels.

    Hold _____ seconds, repeat _____ times.
Weight bearing:

*In sitting position*

12. **Plantarflexor stretching:**

Sitting at the edge of a chair with foot flat under chair as far as possible without lifting the heel. Trying to stand, a stretch will be felt behind the leg.

Hold _____ seconds, repeat _____ times.

*In standing position*

13. **Gastrocnemius stretching:**

Stand with forearms against a wall. Separate feet one in front of the other so that injured foot is resting flat behind. Lean body forward keeping the back leg straight with the heel on the floor. A stretch will be felt behind the leg.

Hold _____ seconds, repeat _____ times.
14. **Soleus stretching:**

Stand with forearms against a wall. Separate feet one in front of the other so that injured foot is resting flat behind. Lean body forward keeping the back knee slightly bent and the heel on the floor. A stretch will be felt behind the leg.

Hold _____ seconds, repeat _____ times.

15. **Gastrocnemius and soleus stretching:**

Forearms against a wall, stand with two feet equally away from the wall. Lean body forward keeping the knees straight for the gastroc stretch and the knees slightly bent for the soleus stretch. Always keep the heels on the floor. A stretch will be felt behind the leg.

Hold _____ seconds, repeat _____ times.
16. Heel cord, gastrocnemius and soleus stretching:

Holding on to a rail, stand with balls of feet on the edge of a step. Slowly lower heels down keeping the knees straight for the gastroc stretch and the knees slightly bent for the soleus stretch.

Hold _____ seconds, repeat ______ times. This can be done both feet together or one foot at a time.

17. Invertor and evertor stretching:

Standing, shift your weight to the outside of your foot (little toe) for evertor stretch, and on the inside of your foot (big toe) for invertor stretch.

Hold each position _____ seconds, repeat _____ times.
Ankle strengthening exercises:

Non weight bearing:

18. Dorsiflexor strengthening:

Theraband tubing or band around top of foot and around sturdy table leg. In a slow and controlled manner, pull your foot up against tubing resistance. Keep the knee straight.

Hold ____ seconds, repeat ____ times.

19. Plantarflexor strengthening:

Theraband tubing or band under ball of foot, hold opposite Ends. Heel elevated on rolled up towel. Start with foot straight up, in a slow and controlled manner, push foot down against tubing resistance. Keep the knee straight.

Hold ____ seconds, repeat ____ times.
20. **Invertor strengthening:**

Theraband tubing or band around inside of foot and around sturdy table leg. In a slow and controlled manner, pull your foot in against tubing resistance. Keep the knee straight.

Hold ____ seconds, repeat ____ times.

21. **Evertor strengthening:**

Theraband tubing or band around outside of foot and around sturdy table leg. In a slow and controlled manner, push your foot out against tubing resistance. Keep the knee straight.

Hold ____ seconds, repeat ____ times.

22. **Evertor strengthening:**

Theraband tubing or band around both feet. In a slow and controlled manner, push your feet out against tubing resistance. Keep the knee straight.

Hold ____ seconds, repeat ____ times.
Weight bearing:

23. Plantarflexor strengthening: double-legged toe raises:

a) supported:

Stand, use table or wall for support. Slowly raise heels up off floor. Slowly lower heels back to floor. Do exercise with knees straight, repeat exercise with knees slightly bent.

Hold ____ seconds, repeat ____ times.

24. Plantarflexor strengthening: double-legged toe raises:

b) unsupported:

Standing, slowly raise heels up off floor. Slowly lower heels back to floor. Do exercise with knees straight, repeat exercise with knees slightly bent.

Hold ____ seconds, repeat ____ times.
25. **Plantarflexor strengthening: single-legged toe raises**

*a) supported:*  
Standing on injured foot, using a table or wall for support. Slowly raise heel up, then slowly lower heels back to floor. Do exercise with knee straight, repeat exercise with knees slightly bent. Progress to adding weight on your shoulders.  
Hold ____ seconds, repeat ____ times.

26. **Plantarflexor strengthening: single-legged toe raises:**

*b) unsupported:*  
Standing on injured foot, slowly raise heel up, then slowly lower heels back to floor. Do exercise with knee straight, repeat exercise with knees slightly bent. Progress to adding weight on your shoulders.  
Hold ____ seconds, repeat ____ times.
Balance exercises:

27. Tandem walking:
   Walking in a straight line one foot in front of the other.
   For _____ meters.

28. Heel walking:
   Walking forward and backward on heels (walking on an imaginary line).
   For _____ meters.

29. Toe walking:
   Walking forward and backward on toes (walking on an imaginary line).
   For _____ meters.

30. Pink flamingo:
   Stand and balance on injured foot as long as possible. Use support of a table or wall if needed. Progress to:
   1. no hand support with arms out to side,
   2. arms out in front,
   3. arms on hips,
   4. arms down beside trunk,
   5. move arms around,
   6. move arms and leg around,
   7. eyes closed.
31. Airplane:

Balance on one leg with knee slightly bent and the arms out to the side. Bend the trunk forward to form a cross. Keep your balance in this position as long as possible.

Repeat _____ times.

32. Pillow:

Stand on one foot on a pillow. Go through the same progression of #30 to increase difficulty level.

Hold as long as possible, repeat _____ times.

33. Carioca walking:

Walk sideways, crossing the left foot in front and then behind the right foot for 10 meters. Reverse pattern and direction. Begin with 5 times, gradually increase to 10 times. Progress to Carioca running once jogging is well tolerated.