



# Soft Tissue Foot Injury

Doncaster Royal Infirmary  
Armthorpe Road  
Doncaster  
DN2 5LT

Tel: 01302 644665

## You will not be routinely followed up.

This is a follow-up letter to your recent telephone consultation with the fracture care team explaining the ongoing management of your injury. Your case has been reviewed by an Orthopaedic Consultant (Bone Specialist) and Fracture Care Extended Scope Physiotherapist.

## You have sustained a soft tissue injury (sprain) to your foot.

**Healing:** It normally takes approximately 6 weeks to unite (heal).

**Pain & swelling:** Pain and swelling can be ongoing for 3-6 months. Swelling is often worse at the end of the day and elevating it will help. Take pain killers as prescribed.

**Walking:** You may walk on the foot as comfort allows but you may find it easier to walk on your heel in the early stages. The boot you have been given is for your comfort only and is not needed to aid fracture healing.

If you are worried that you are unable to follow this rehabilitation plan, or have any questions, then please phone the Fracture Care Team for advice.

We do not routinely follow up patients with this type of injury.

If you are experiencing pain or symptoms, other than at the site of the original injury or surrounding area, please get in touch using the telephone details at the top of this letter.

**If after six weeks you are still experiencing significant pain and swelling or struggling to wean out of the boot please do not hesitate to contact us for a further consultation.**

## Please follow the Management plan shown below:

### What to expect:

Weeks since injury	Rehabilitation plan
0-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ If supplied, wear the boot for comfort and use crutches when walking.</li><li>✓ Take the boot off at night, when resting at home and to wash.</li><li>✓ Regularly perform the exercises below to get your movement back.</li><li>✓ Start your exercises straight away.</li><li>✓ If you are using crutches, try to stop using them as soon as you are able.</li></ul>
2-6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Try to stop using the boot and walk without crutches.</li><li>✓ Start around your home at first. You will want to wear the boot if you go on a longer walk.</li><li>✓ Start the exercises below labelled 'Exercises from 2 weeks onwards'.</li></ul>

6-12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Your injury is healed. You may have mild pain and swelling for 3-6 months.</li> <li>✓ Begin to resume normal activity - be guided by any pain you experience.</li> <li>✓ You should be able to carry out day to day activities.</li> <li>✗ Arduous tasks and long walks may still cause some discomfort and swelling.</li> </ul>
------	---

### Advice for a new injury:

#### Cold packs:

A cold pack (ice pack or frozen peas wrapped in a damp towel) can provide short term pain relief. Apply this to the sore area for up to 15 minutes, every few hours ensuring the ice is never in direct contact with the skin.

#### Rest and Elevation:

Try to rest the foot for the first 24-72 hours to allow the early stage of healing to begin. Raise your ankle above the level of your hips to reduce swelling. You can use pillows or a stool to keep your foot up.

#### Early movement and exercise:

Early movement of the ankle and foot is important to promote circulation and reduce the risk of developing a DVT (blood clot). Follow the exercises below without causing too much pain. This will ensure your ankle and foot do not become too stiff. These exercises will help the healing process.

Early weight bearing (putting weight through your injured foot) helps increase the speed of healing. Try to walk as normally as possible as this will help with your recovery.

### Smoking cessation

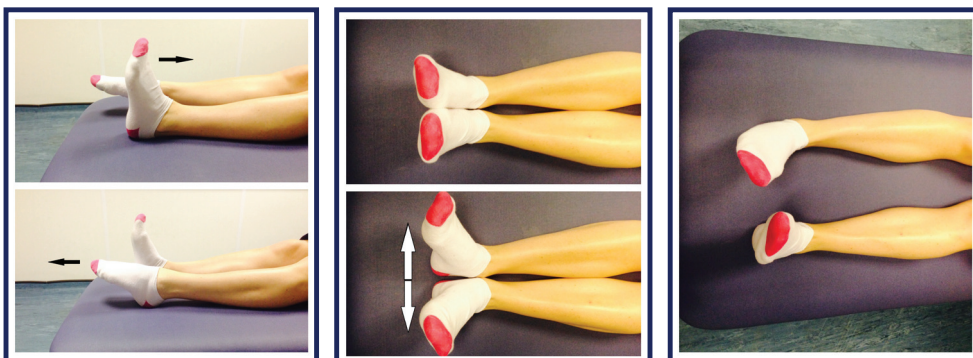
Medical evidence suggests that smoking prolongs fracture healing time. In extreme cases it can stop healing altogether. It is important that you consider this information with relation to your recent injury. Stopping smoking during the healing phase of your fracture will help ensure optimal recovery from this injury.

For advice on smoking cessation and local support available, please refer to the following website: <http://smokefree.nhs.uk> or discuss this with your GP.

### Initial exercises to 3-4 times a day

#### Ankle and foot range of movement exercises. Repeat these 10 times each.

1. Point your foot up and down within a comfortable range of movement.
2. With your heels together, move your toes apart, as shown in the picture.
3. Make circles with your foot in one direction and then change direction.

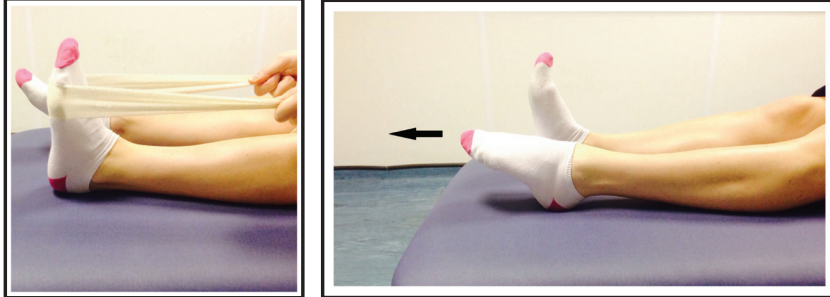


## Exercises to start from week 2 onwards

### Ankle stretches

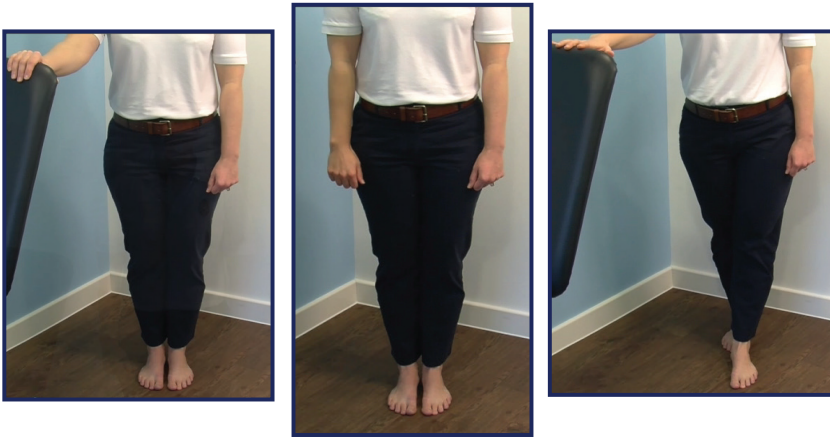
1. Sit with your leg straight out in front of you. Put a towel/bandage around your foot and pull it towards you. Feel a stretch in the back of your calf.
2. Point your toes down as far as they go, then use the other foot on top to apply some pressure to create a stretch on the top of your foot.

Hold both stretches for up to 30 seconds and repeat 3 times.



### Balance strategy exercises

**Level 1:** Only for patients who could not stand on one leg before their injury.



a) Stand with your feet as close together as possible, using something firm to hold onto. Hold this for 30 seconds. If you can do this move onto Level 1b.

b) As above, but removing your hand so that you are balancing. Hold this for 30 seconds. If you can do this move onto Level 1c.

c) Holding onto something firm, put one foot in front of each other as close together as you feel comfortable with.

Hold this for 30 seconds. If you can do this easily you may like to try without holding on, but only if you feel confident to do so.

**Level 2:** Only for patients who could stand on one leg before their injury.



a) Holding onto a firm surface, attempt to stand on one leg. Hold this for 30 seconds, making sure it does not induce any pain. Once you can achieve this pain free, move to Level 2b.

b) As above, but removing your hand so that you are balancing. Hold this for 30 seconds. If you can do this move onto Level 2c.

c) Once confident with your eyes open, progress to attempting this with your eyes closed. Always stand in a safe environment with a firm surface close by should you need it. Hold this for 30 seconds.