

Exercise Program for Ankle Sprain

After an ankle sprain, performing home exercises can help you regain strength and function in your ankle.

There are 5 exercises in this program: Ankle Alphabet.
Ankle Dorsiflexion and Plantarflexion.
Resisted Ankle Inversion.
Resisted Ankle Eversion, and Single Leg Balance.

Start each exercise slowly. A little discomfort is normal, but stop any exercise that causes pain.

Now, let's get started.

To do the ankle alphabet: Sit in a chair or on the floor with your legs straight in front of you.

Using the big toe on your affected foot as a "pencil," write the letters of the alphabet in the air.

Repeat 3 times.

To do ankle dorsiflexion and plantarflexion: Sit on the floor or in bed with your legs straight in front of you.

Point your affected foot away from your body as far as you can. Then flex your foot by pulling your toes toward your body as far as you can.

Repeat 10 times.

To do resisted ankle inversion: Tie a resistance band or elastic tubing around your affected foot.

Sit on the floor and cross your unaffected leg over your affected leg.

Hold the end of the resistance band and press your top foot against the band.

Turn your affected foot inward, pushing against the band. Hold for 5 seconds, then return to the starting position.

Repeat 10 times.

To do resisted ankle eversion: Sit on the floor with your legs straight.

Tie a resistance band or elastic tubing around your affected foot.

Hold the end of the resistance band and press your unaffected foot against the band to anchor it. Turn your affected foot outward, pulling against the band. Hold for 5 seconds, then return to the starting position.

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Repeat 10 times.

To do a single leg balance: Stand with your unaffected side next to a chair back, table, or countertop for balance.

Bend your knees slightly. Then lift your unaffected foot off the floor to balance on your affected leg.

Balance for 30 seconds, then lower your foot.

As you get stronger, slowly increase the balance time up to 3 minutes.

Talk to your healthcare provider or physical therapist about these exercises and others to improve function in your ankle.