

Patient
Information

Calf Sprain or Tear

In the **first week** after the injury, the application of ice is recommended. For example a bag of frozen peas wrapped in a damp tea towel applied to the calf for 10 to 15 minutes. A two hour gap is recommended between applications.

Elevation is also recommended whilst swelling persists; ideally the foot should be as high as the hip or higher. It is better not to walk or exercise but to rest for this initial time period; simple wiggling of the toes and ankle is sufficient.



With your foot elevated circle your ankle.

Change directions.

Repeat 20 times, 4 times daily

At **two days** post injury, it is important to move your ankle, which helps the repairing muscle cells heal. Walking as pain allows, also facilitates the healing process. Again, **do not** stand or walk for so long that pain and swelling increase.

Gentle calf stretches should be performed. The stretch should nudge into the pain and be sustained for 30 seconds. Each stretch should be repeated 4 times and be done 3 to 4 times a day.

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Calf Stretches from 2 days post injury



In sitting, slide your heel along the floor towards you, keeping your foot flat, until you feel a stretch in your calf muscle. Hold for 20 seconds then release. Repeat 4 times. Do 3 to 4 times a day.

Stand in a walking position with the leg to be stretched behind you. Hold on to a support. Bend the leg to be stretched and let the weight of your body stretch your calf without lifting the heel off the floor. Hold for approximately 30 seconds, relax. Repeat 4 times. Do 3 to 4 times a day.



Stand in a walking position with the leg to be stretched straight behind you, heel down and the other leg bent in front of you. Take support from a wall or chair.



Lean your body forwards and down until you feel the stretching in the calf of the straight leg. Hold for approximately 30 seconds then relax. Stretch the other leg. Repeat 4 times. Do 3 to 4 times a day.

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At **two weeks** post injury if you feel your calf is still tight, then applying heat, such as a hot water bottle or hot bath, may help before doing stretches.

Around **three weeks** post injury, gradual strengthening exercises can be started. These will load the collagen structures (building blocks of the muscle) to become stronger. These exercises should be pain free.



Stand using a chair or wall for support. Push up on to your toes. Repeat 10 times. Do 3 to 4 times a day.

Progress on to the following exercise at **4 to 5 weeks** post injury or as pain allows:

Stand on one leg, using a chair or wall for support. Push up on your toes. Repeat 10 times. Do 3 to 4 times a day.



Running, jumping and other “bounce” like activities, for example, football, netball and dancing should gradually be introduced at around 4 to 6 weeks post injury.



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Please retain this leaflet for future reference.

For further advice or information you can telephone your local Minor Injury Unit (MIU):

Chippenham Community Hospital

Rowden Hill

Chippenham

SN15 2AJ

Tel: 01249 456 403/4

Open: 07:00am to 23:00pm; 7 days a week

Trowbridge Community Hospital

Adcroft Street

Trowbridge

BA14 8PH

Tel: 01225 711 329

Open: 07:00am to 23:00pm; 7 days a week

From 1st January 2019 smoking will not be permitted on any NHS site in England. Smoking will not be permitted within any of our buildings or anywhere outside on our sites. Smoking facilities will not be provided. Please be considerate of others when vaping in hospital grounds.

This information sheet is available to order in other languages and formats. If you would like a copy, please contact us on 01793 604031 or email gwh.pals@nhs.net

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