

Ankle Sprain Strengthening Exercises

Following an ankle sprain, strengthening exercises should be performed once you can bear weight comfortably and your range of motion is near full. There are several types of strengthening exercises. The easiest to begin with is isometric exercises, which essentially is pushing against a fixed object with your ankle. Once this has been mastered, you can progress to isotonic exercises, which essentially is range of motion of the ankle, but against resistance. Here the isotonic exercises are performed with the use of a resistance band, obtained via your local therapist or at a sporting goods store.

Range of Motion Exercises



While seated, bring your ankle up and out. Hold this everted position for a count of 10. Repeat 10 times.



This stretch should be considered only when the pain in the ankle has significantly subsided. While standing on the edge of a stair, drop your ankles down and hold this stretched position for a count of 10. Repeat 10 times.



From the starting position, point your toes down and hold this position for a count of 10. Repeat 10 times.



Consider this stretch only when the pain from an ankle sprain has significantly subsided. Stand 12 inches from a wall with your toes pointing toward the wall. Squat down and hold this position for a count of 10. Repeat 10 times.

Isometric Exercises



Place your ankle in the “down and in” position against a fixed object such as a couch. Hold this position for a count of 10. Repeat 10 times.



Place your ankle in the “up and out” position against the same object. Hold this position for a count of 10. Repeat 10 times.

Place your ankle down against a fixed object and hold for a count of 10. Repeat 10 times.

Push your ankle up against a fixed object and hold for a count of 10. Repeat 10 times.

Isotonic Exercises



Using a resistance band around your forefoot, hold the ends of the band with your hand and gently push your ankle down as far as you can and then back to the starting position. Repeat 10 times.



Tie the resistance bands around a fixed object and wrap the ends around your forefoot. Start with your foot pointing down and pull your ankle up as far as you can. Return to the starting position and cycle your ankle 10 times.



Tie the band around an object to the outer side of your ankle. Start with the foot relaxed and then move your ankle down and in. Return to the relaxed position and repeat 10 times.



Tie the ends of the bands around an object to the inside of your ankle and hold your foot relaxed. Bring your foot up and out and then back to the resting position. Repeat 10 times.

Once you have regained the motion and strength in your ankle, you are ready for sporting activities such as gentle jogging and biking. After you feel your ankle strength is approximately 80% of your other side, then you can begin cutting or twisting sports.

Proprioceptive Exercises



Stand with your affected leg on a pillow. Hold this position for a count of 10. Repeat 10 times.



Stand on your affected leg with resistance band applied to your unaffected leg. Bring your unaffected leg forward then back to the starting position. Repeat 10 times. Start slowly and progress to a faster speed for a more difficult workout.



Again start slowly and progress your speed at your own pace.



For a more advanced exercise, swing your unaffected leg behind you and then back.

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