

Sports Therapy
Manual Therapy
Electrotherapy
Manipulation
Rehabilitation
Pre-habilitation
Clinical Pilates
Pre-Season Screening
Exercise Prescription
Massage

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AUSTRALIAN
PHYSIOTHERAPY
ASSOCIATION

Member

POST-OPERATIVE PHYSIOTHERAPY INFORMATION

ANKLE ARTHROSCOPE

SURGERY:

After your surgery you will have a crepe bandage on your ankle. When the bandage is removed you will see only small puncture marks made by the surgical instruments, closed with steri-strips or a single stitch. Although this may seem minor, the surgery inside your joint is more traumatic and must be given full opportunity to recover. YOUR RECOVERY is greatly dependent on your post-operative routine. Many procedures can be performed via arthroscopic surgery, and your physiotherapist will explain what procedure has been performed on your ankle and any special advice for that procedure

CARE OF YOUR ANKLE AFTER SURGERY:

During the first few days after your operation, your ankle is recovering from the trauma of surgery, and you need to take care not to “over-do-it”. This means elevating your ankle above the level of your hip, for the majority of the day in the first week post-op. Also using your crutches (as described below) to help support your ankle, and wearing your bandage to help control swelling. **If you notice an increase in pain or swelling around your ankle it is time to slow down a little and put your feet up.**

CRUTCHES:

Should be used to stay non-weight bearing or part-weight bearing as instructed by the physiotherapist. You may gradually increase your weight bearing over the first few days. **Use the crutches until you can walk comfortably without a limp**, which is usually about two days after your surgery.

UP STAIRS - Good leg, operated leg, crutches
DOWN STAIRS - Crutches, operated leg, good leg

ELEVATION:

Elevation of your foot and ankle in the early days post-operatively is the most important way to reduce swelling, therefore reducing pain and aiding tissue healing. The ankle should stay at the level of the hip or higher, if possible, while sitting, or supported underneath with pillows overnight.

ICING YOUR ANKLE:

Ice has the effect of controlling inflammation and swelling which your ankle is prone to after surgery or trauma. Always use a thin cloth between ice and your skin. (Ice can burn if left on your skin). You can use a commercial ice pack, bag of frozen vegetables or crushed ice. For the first 2 weeks after your surgery, try to ice your ankle 3 - 4 times/day, especially after your exercises. Apply the ice to your ankle for 15 minutes each time, and allow at least 1 hour between applications.

BANDAGE:

- Reduce crepe bandage to an elastic bandage or ‘tubigrip’ on your ankle until the swelling is no longer present. This is usually 2 - 3 weeks. The wounds will be covered by waterproof dressings to allow you to shower.
- Leave all bandages intact on your ankle until you see your surgeon for your review.

PHYSIOTHERAPY:

It is important to regain movement and strength of your ankle and good balance on your operated leg. If you plan to return to high-level activities, or you are concerned regarding your progress, it is wise to consult a physiotherapist for appropriate rehabilitation.

EXERCISE PROGRAMME:

A physiotherapist will help you to commence these exercises while you are in hospital.

These exercises will be limited by your bandage at first. You should gently **ENCOURAGE** the movements within the limits of discomfort and the bandage. Do not force the movements. Once the bandage is removed continue the exercises until you regain full range of movement, which should be by 2 - 3 weeks after your surgery.

ANKLE MOVES

Sit so that foot is hanging free. Move ankle in the following directions:

UP/DOWN - Point foot away from you, then bring toes and foot back towards you.

SIDE/SIDE - Keep leg still and move sole of foot to face inwards, then outwards.

CIRCLES - Keep leg still and move ankle to "draw" a circle with your toes. Gently try to make the circle as big as possible. Do both directions.

REPETITIONS: 2 minutes each direction - 3 times/day.



UP AND DOWN



SIDE TO SIDE AND CIRCLES

RETURN TO SPORTS/ACTIVITY

Please discuss with your surgeon at your review about timeframes and guidelines for returning to specific activities or sports (e.g. gym, running, swimming, contact sports etc.).

You may need a consultation with your physiotherapist to work towards these goals.

CHANGE IN POST – OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

There are occasions that during surgery your surgeon comes across unexpected trauma, which may require additional work. This may change your post operative recovery instructions (e.g. change in weight bearing status, etc.). If you find that your post operative instructions from your surgeon are different to the pre operative physiotherapy instructions, please contact us on (03) 9819 2827 and we will endeavor to correct any confusion you may have.