Ankle Strengthening Exercises: Exercise Treatment For Ankle Sprain

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Patient Information Series
**Alphabet Range of Motion**

Sit in a chair and cross the affected leg over the leg at the knee. Using your big toe as a pointer, trace capital letters of the alphabet from A to Z. Hold your big toe rigid so all motion comes from the ankle. Repeat exercise every hour while awake.

**Proprioception**

Stand on injured ankle. Place elastic band under table leg and over uninjured ankle. Pull to side, hold and return. Continue until fatigued. Then face in opposite direction and pull across injured ankle.

**Ankle Lift**

Take a piece of rope about 1.5 feet long, and either tie a 5 pound weight to each end or loop rope around a 10 pound weight. Sit on a counter and drop rope over the top of toes (while wearing an athletic shoe). Lift the weight with your ankle as many times as possible.

**Toe Raise/Heel Drop**

Stand with forefeet on raised surface, as if doing a backdive off of a diving board. Raise up onto your toes, then return to starting position. Next, let your weight take your heels down below the level of the surface so that the back of your calf is stretched. Hold each position for 10-15 seconds. Repeat until calf is fully fatigued.
Dorsiflexion / Towel Stretch

1. Pull your foot up towards your head. Perform 3 sets of 10 repetitions. If unable to pull your foot upwards, use a towel to gently assist your foot.

2. Stand with your ankle and knee of the affected leg bent with your foot flat on the floor. Perform 3 sets of 10 repetitions.

Range of Motion

Rotate your foot at the ankle in large circles stretching you ankle maximally in all directions as tolerated by comfort.

Balance Exercises

Stand on your injured foot and attempt to maintain balance without wobbling or falling. Once perfected, repeat with your eyes closed for 1-2 minutes at a time.

Wobble Board Exercises

Wobble boards can help restore motion and strengthen your ankle. We offer wobble board pillows for purchase.
Isometrics

1. **Eversion:** Sit on the floor with your affected foot resting against a wall with your leg straight. Push the outer border of your foot into the wall and hold contraction to a count of 10. Repeat 10 times.

2. **Inversion:** Sit on the floor with your feet together so the soles of your feet meet. Squeeze feet together and hold for a count of 10. Repeat 10 times.

3. **Plantar Flexion:** Sit on the floor with the sole of your affected foot flat against the wall. Push your foot into the wall (like your pushing on a gas pedal of a car), and hold for a count of 10. Repeat 10 times.

4. **Dorsiflexion:** Sit on the floor with your legs straight. Cross your unaffected foot over your affected foot so the sole of the uninvolved foot rests on top of the involved foot. Pull the involved foot upwards towards your head, but resist motion with your opposite foot. Hold contractions for a count of 10. Repeat 10 times.

Strengthening

1. **Walking:** Walk on your toes. Walk on your heels.

2. **Towel Curling:** Place a towel on a smooth floor. Position both feet on the edge of the towel and curl your toes alternately, so the towel is drawn towards you. After completing the above, place a weight on the other end of the towel to offer resistance.

3. **Pick Up Exercises:** Pick up small items such as marbles, piece of sponge, or gauze using your toes.

4. **Eversion Strengthening:** Secure rubber tubing around the forefoot of your affected foot. Place the unaffected foot next to the affected foot on top of the tubing. With your ankle flexed to 90 degrees and resisting the rubber band, move your affected foot outward. Perform 3 sets of 10 repetitions.

5. **Inversion Strengthening:** Secure rubber tubing around the forefoot of your affected foot. Stabilize the heel of the affected foot on top of the forefoot of the unaffected foot. This will invert your affected ankle. Further invert your affected ankle against the resistance of the rubber band. Perform 3 sets of 10 repetitions.