

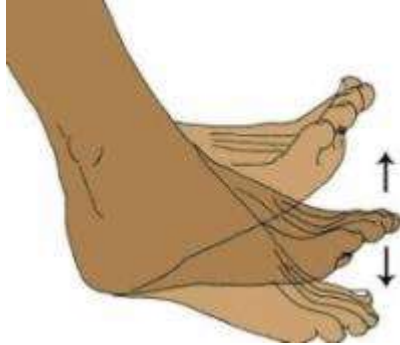
## Ankle and Foot Exercises

It is normal to feel mild stretching, pulling, tightness, or discomfort as you do these exercises, but you should stop right away if you feel sudden severe pain or your pain gets worse.

### 1. Stretching and range of motion exercises

These exercises warm up your muscles and joints and improve the movement and flexibility of your ankle. These exercises also help to relieve pain, numbness, and tingling.

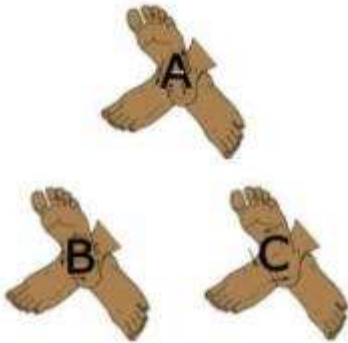
#### Exercise A: Dorsiflexion/Plantar Flexion



1. Sit with your knee straight or bent. **Do not** rest your foot on anything.
2. Flex your ankle to tilt the top of your foot toward your shin.
3. Hold this position for 3-5 seconds.
4. Point your toes downward to tilt the top of your foot away from your shin.
5. Hold this position for 3-5 seconds.

Repeat 10 times. Complete this exercise 2-3 times a day.

#### Exercise B: Ankle Alphabet



1. Sit with your "bad" foot supported at your lower leg.
  - Make sure your foot has room to move freely.
2. Think of your "bad" foot as a paintbrush, and move your foot to trace each letter of the alphabet in the air. Keep your hip and knee still while you trace. Make the letters as large as you can without increasing any discomfort.
3. Trace every letter from A to Z.

Complete this exercise 2-3 times a day.

#### Exercise C: Ankle Dorsiflexion, Passive

1. Sit on a chair that is placed on a non-carpeted surface.

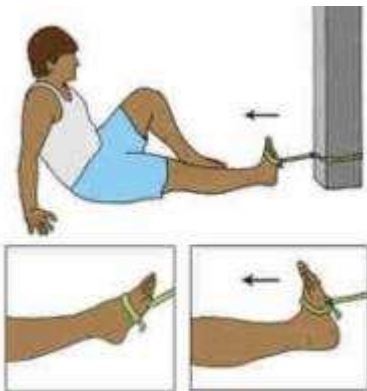
2. Place your "bad" foot on the floor, directly under your knee. Extend your opposite leg for support.
3. Keeping your heel down, slide your "bad" foot back toward the chair until you feel a stretch at your ankle or calf. If you do not feel a stretch, slide your buttocks forward to the edge of the chair.
4. Hold this stretch for 3-5 seconds.

Repeat 10 times. Complete this stretch 2-3 times a day.

## 2. Strengthening exercises

These exercises build strength and endurance in your ankle. Endurance is the ability to use your muscles for a long time, even after they get tired.

### Exercise D: Dorsiflexors



1. Secure a rubber exercise band or tube to an object, such as a table leg, that will stay still when the band is pulled. Secure the other end around your "bad" foot.
  2. Sit on the floor, facing the object with your "bad" leg extended. The band or tube should be slightly tense when your foot is relaxed.
  3. Slowly flex your "bad" ankle and toes to bring your foot toward you.
  4. Hold this position for 3-5 seconds.
  5. Slowly return your foot to the starting position, controlling the band as you do that.
- Repeat 10 times. Complete this exercise 2-3 times a day.

### Exercise E: Plantar Flexors

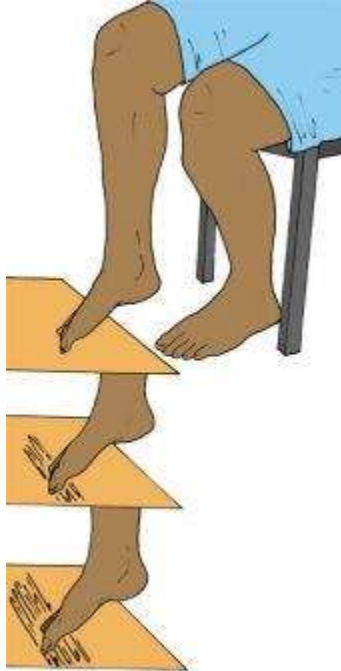


1. Sit on the floor with your "bad" leg extended.
2. Loop a rubber exercise band or tube around the ball of your "bad" foot. The band or tube should be slightly tense when your foot is relaxed.
3. Slowly point your toes downward, pushing them away from you.

4. Hold this position for 3-5 seconds.
5. Slowly release the tension in the band or tube, controlling smoothly until your foot is back in the starting position.

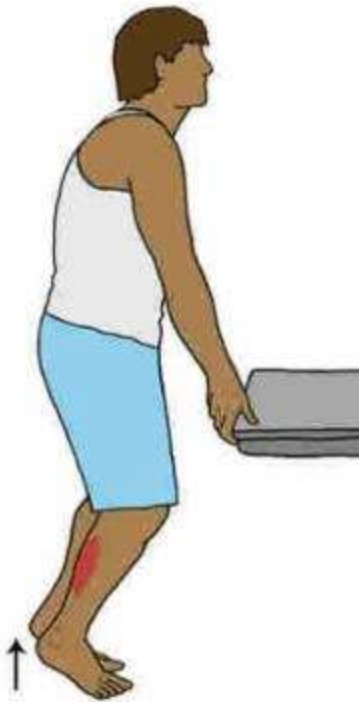
Repeat 10 times. Complete this exercise 2-3 times a day.

### **Exercise F: Towel Curls**



1. Sit in a chair on a non-carpeted surface, and put your feet on the floor.
  2. Place a towel in front of your feet.
  3. Keeping your heel on the floor, put your "bad" foot on the towel.
  4. Pull the towel toward you by grabbing the towel with your toes and curling them under. Keep your heel on the floor.
  5. Let your toes relax.
  6. Grab the towel again. Keep going until the towel is completely underneath your foot.
- Repeat 10 times. Complete this exercise 2-3 times a day.

### **Exercise G: Heel Raise**



1. Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart.
2. Keep your weight spread evenly over the width of your feet while you rise up on your toes. Use a wall or table to steady yourself, but try not to use it for support.
3. If this exercise is too easy, try standing on one leg (the "bad" one) while the "good" leg is held off the ground.
4. Hold this position for 3-5 seconds.

Repeat 10 times. Complete this exercise 2-3 times a day.

### **Exercise F. Deep Tissue Massage**

1. Roll the arch and heel area of your "bad" foot on a ball (tennis ball, golf ball, lacrosse ball), a water bottle, or a rolling pin to massage the tissues.
2. Perform on each foot for 30-60 seconds
3. Complete this exercise 2-3 times a day.

Consider a "spiky" ball (e.g Rubz ball)...similar to this one (we do not endorse any specific product or receive any financial benefit):



[https://www.amazon.com/SUREFOOT-Foot-Rubz-Massage-Color/dp/B003XWZWG4/ref=sr\\_1\\_4?dchild=1&hvadid=77996658377162&hvbm=be&hvdev=c&hvqmt=e&keywords=rubz+ball&qid=1606229372&sr=8-4&tag=mh0b-20](https://www.amazon.com/SUREFOOT-Foot-Rubz-Massage-Color/dp/B003XWZWG4/ref=sr_1_4?dchild=1&hvadid=77996658377162&hvbm=be&hvdev=c&hvqmt=e&keywords=rubz+ball&qid=1606229372&sr=8-4&tag=mh0b-20)

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