

Name:

Date:

*You have been diagnosed with:*

### Treatment of a lower limb injury

**Rest** your injured limb for the first 48 hours after the injury, then start to walk about more as the pain allows.

You may have been provided with crutches, use these for support if needed, but stop using them as soon as the pain is bearable without them.

You should not play sport or do vigorous exercise involving for at least 3-4 weeks after the injury. You should build up your level of activity gently before returning fully to sport.

**Ice packs** - Ice should be applied within 5-10 minutes of the injury occurring, for a period of 20 minutes. This can be repeated every 2 or 3 hours whilst you are awake for the next 2 days.

*Ice can burn or cause frostbite* if applied directly to the skin. Wrap ice in a wet flannel before use.

*Do not use ice packs:*

- On areas of skin that are in poor condition.
- Over areas of skin with poor sensation.
- Over areas of the body with poor circulation.
- If you have diabetes.

**Pain relief** – Paracetamol and ibuprofen are effective painkillers that you can buy. Follow the manufacturers' directions, taking regular doses. Talk to your Pharmacist if you need further advice.

**Elevation is important-** Elevate the affected limb to minimise swelling, particularly during the first few days after the injury when resting. This will help with the pain & discomfort. Swelling will be worse after a period of being on your feet but should ease with elevation. Some swelling is expected for up to 6 weeks but come back if it becomes severe or is continually increasing.

#### Other things to consider-

Do not stop moving the joint. Don't do anything that causes pain, but gently get the joint moving again. The aim is to get the ankle joint moving in normal directions, and to prevent it becoming stiff.

If you have persisting pain that is not improving see your GP. Physiotherapy maybe needed for some sprains if they are not healing well.

Many sprains and strains can be painful for 6 to 12 weeks.

Bruising will spread down from the injury and may appear worse in the days after the injury, but this is normal.

#### In the injured limb look for:

- **Increasing, severe pain**
- **Loss of sensation or numbness**
- **Cold, pale feet or toes**

**Go straight to A&E if you have any of these.**

## Dealing with swelling - Effective elevation

### Correct

Elevating your lower limb injury to the level of your heart will be effective.



### Incorrect

Elevating your injured lower limb to this level will not be effective.



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**Statement of fitness for work** - A doctor's certificate is not required until you have been off work for more than 7 calendar days. Your GP will issue this, a phone consultation is usually suitable.

**Driving** - It is your responsibility to ensure you are fit to drive. Driving with an injury can be unsafe. If you are stopped by the police you may be asked to prove that you are in full control of your vehicle.

### Smoking cessation

**Smoking has been shown to increase healing time.**

In some cases it can stop healing altogether. Stopping smoking while your heals will help you make a good recovery. Stopping smoking for good will be even better for you.

Further information can be found at :

[www.nhs.uk/smokefree](http://www.nhs.uk/smokefree)



Further healthcare information can be found at:

[www.patient.co.uk](http://www.patient.co.uk)  
[www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

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For real time updates on East Kent MIU and A&E current waiting times please download the WaitLess app.



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**Estuary View Minor Injuries Unit**  
Boorman Way  
Whitstable  
Kent  
CT5 3SE  
01227 284309

**Open 8am to 8pm every day**



## Lower limb injury- Sprains and strains

### Information for patients

[www.whitstablemedicalpractice.co.uk](http://www.whitstablemedicalpractice.co.uk)  
>Local services >Virtual fracture clinic

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