



## Discharge advice following a Weber B ankle fracture

---

This information is to help you manage your fractured ankle at home. You have been discharged from the clinic today but if you have any queries or concerns, please contact the trauma nurse practitioners on 0118 322 8925 or the orthopaedic administration team on 0118 322 7415, Monday to Friday 9am-3pm.

---

Your date of injury is: \_\_\_\_\_

### What is my injury?

You have a stable ankle fracture, which is a simple break to your distal fibula (the thinner bone on the outside of your lower leg). This may also be referred to as a stable Weber B ankle fracture (figure 1).

The weight-bearing X-ray of your injured ankle shows that the joint is stable and does not need surgery. Your plaster cast has been removed and you have been placed in a weight-bearing supportive walking boot.

If you were initially prescribed medication to prevent thrombosis – blood clots in the veins. You will be advised at your clinic appointment whether to continue taking it or to stop.

### How is my injury treated?

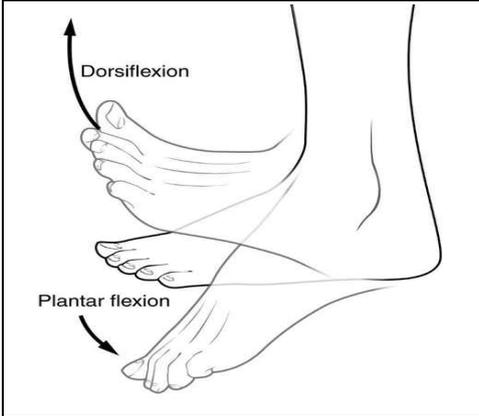
These fractures normally heal well without any issues, but need a period of protection by your boot for this to occur.

You can put your full weight through the boot and mobilise with the help of crutches if necessary. You should wear the boot for a period of six weeks in total from the date of your injury and then discard it.



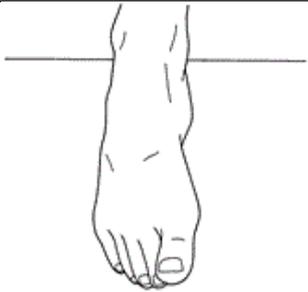
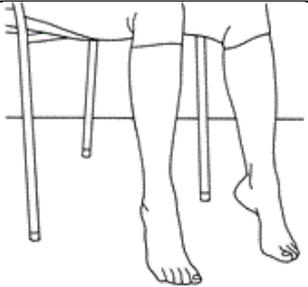
Walker boot

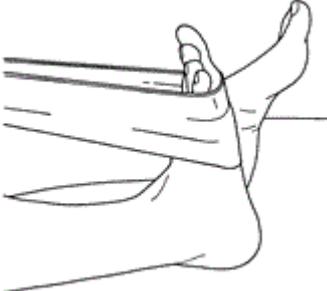
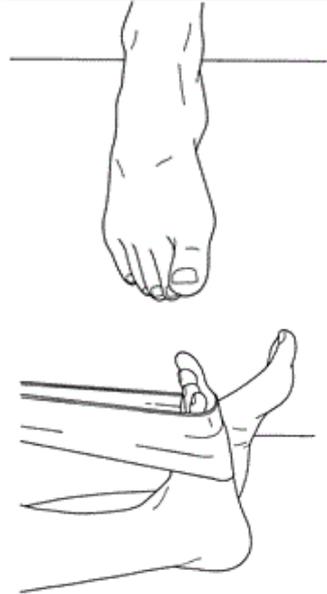
## Recovery and rehabilitation plan

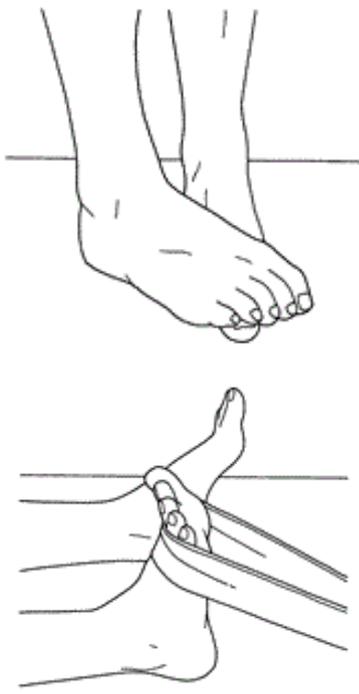
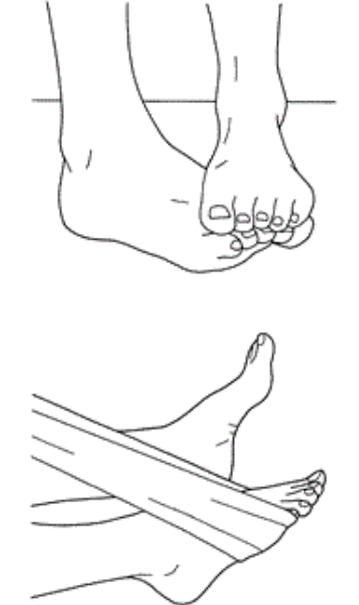
Weeks since injury:	Rehabilitation plan:
1-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You can now fully bear your weight in your walker boot, which you should wear continuously during the day and sleep in it at night-time. You should only remove the boot to carry out the <b>Stage 1 gentle movement exercises</b> pictured below, and to wash your skin. Complete these exercises 3-4 times daily to avoid your ankle joint stiffening up and to keep the blood flow circulating in your lower leg.</li> </ul> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: flex-start; margin-top: 10px;"> <div data-bbox="354 609 833 1025" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">  <p>The diagram shows a side view of a human foot and ankle. An upward-pointing arrow is labeled 'Dorsiflexion' and a downward-pointing arrow is labeled 'Plantar flexion'. The foot is shown in a neutral position, with the ankle joint clearly visible.</p> </div> <div data-bbox="833 609 1482 1025" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Lie on your back or sit with your feet up.</li> <li>– Bend and straighten your ankles.</li> <li>– Keep your knees straight during the exercise to stretch your calf muscles.</li> <li>– Repeat 10 times</li> </ul> </div> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make sure you keep everything moving that is not immobilised, such as your knee, hip and toes.</li> <li>• It is normal to experience pain and swelling for 3-12 months. Take regular pain relief, such as paracetamol, for mild pain. Add codeine if pain is moderate to severe (but refer to the patient information leaflet inside the painkiller packaging for advice on dosages and side effects). Avoid taking anti-inflammatories such as Ibuprofen within the first two weeks of injury, as this can impair bone healing.</li> <li>• To relieve swelling, try raising your leg above your heart by propping it up on a stool or some pillows. You can also try using ice on the injured ankle. If you use ice packs, wrap them in a cloth such as a clean tea towel or pillowcase before putting them on your skin – putting ice directly onto the skin can cause skin damage. Or you can place a wet tea towel directly over your skin, and then put a bag of frozen peas on top of the towel. Keep the peas in place for 10-15 minutes, checking to make sure that your skin has not become very red. Repeat either of these up to 3 times a day.</li> </ul>

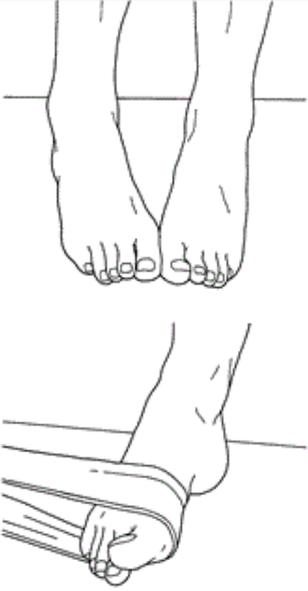
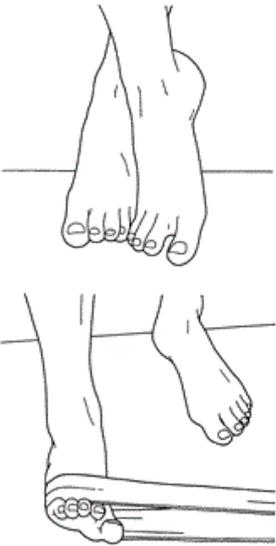
Weeks since injury:	Rehabilitation plan:
2-4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You can begin to remove the boot for sleeping and washing but must re-apply for weight-bearing. You must remember to wear the boot if you get up during the night.</li> <li>You should continue with the movement exercises shown above, which can now be carried out 5-6 times daily.</li> </ul>
5-6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to remove the boot for sleeping, washing and gentle ankle exercises. You can now try weight-bearing over short distances indoors without the boot, wearing a sensible supportive shoe such as a trainer. Continue to wear the boot outdoors.</li> </ul>
6 onwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remove the boot and discard in your general waste bin at home (unfortunately we are unable to reuse or recycle). Begin to walk in your normal footwear, fully weight-bearing and start the <b>Stage 2 range of movement and strengthening exercises</b> outlined below.</li> </ul>

**Stage 2 exercises** – (week 6 onwards) – repeat 5-6 times a day

	<p>While sitting or lying:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Move your ankle slowly in large circles.</li> <li>Repeat in opposite direction.</li> <li>Repeat 10 times.</li> </ul>
	<p>While sitting on a chair:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alternate between raising your toes and raising your heels.</li> <li>Repeat 10 times.</li> </ul>
	<p>While sitting on a chair:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cross the ankle to be stretched over the other knee.</li> <li>Place your hand on top of your foot and help to point your toes.</li> <li>This will stretch your ankle. You should feel the stretch in the front of your shin.</li> <li>Hold for 10 seconds.</li> <li>Repeat 10 times.</li> </ul>

	<p>While standing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Place your foot on a chair. Line your heel up with the front edge of the chair. Hold the back of the chair for balance.</li> <li>• Gradually move your knee towards the back of the chair, keeping your whole foot in contact with the chair.</li> <li>• This will stretch your ankle. You may feel a stretch in your calf and at the front of your ankle.</li> <li>• Hold for 10 seconds.</li> <li>• Repeat 10 times.</li> </ul>
	<p>Sit on the floor or on a chair with one leg out straight in front of you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Put a rubber exercise band or towel around your foot.</li> <li>• Use the band / towel to gently pull your foot up towards your body. You will feel a stretch in your calf.</li> <li>• Hold for 10 seconds.</li> <li>• Repeat 10 times.</li> </ul>
	<p>Sit with your foot on the floor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alternate between raising the inner edge of your foot (big toe) and then the outer edge (little toe).</li> <li>• Hold for 10 seconds.</li> <li>• Repeat 10 times.</li> </ul> <p><b>Or</b></p> <p>Sit on the floor or on a chair with one leg out straight in front of you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Put a rubber exercise band or towel around your foot.</li> <li>• Use the band / towel to gently turn your foot in and out.</li> <li>• Hold for 10 seconds.</li> <li>• Repeat 10 times.</li> </ul>

	<p>Sit on a chair or on the floor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Put the injured foot on top of the other foot.</li><li>• Try to point the toes of the foot that is on top while preventing any movement with the foot underneath.</li><li>• Hold for 10 seconds.</li><li>• Repeat 10 times.</li></ul> <p><b>Or</b></p> <p>Sit on the floor or on a chair with one leg out straight in front of you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tie a rubber exercise band to something secure and put the rubber exercise band around your injured foot. (Make sure there is some tension on the band to pull against).</li><li>• Pull your foot up towards your body against the resistance of the band.</li><li>• Hold for 10 seconds.</li><li>• Repeat 10 times.</li></ul>
	<p>Sit on a chair or on the floor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Put the non-injured foot on top of the other foot.</li><li>• Try to lift the injured foot that is underneath.</li><li>• Hold for 10 seconds. Repeat 10 times.</li></ul> <p><b>Or</b></p> <p>Sit on the floor or on a chair with one leg out straight in front of you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Put a rubber exercise band or towel around your foot.</li><li>• Pull the band / towel towards you to provide some resistance.</li><li>• Point your toes towards the floor, against the resistance of the band/ towel.</li><li>• Slowly return to starting position.</li><li>• Hold for 10 seconds.</li><li>• Repeat 10 times.</li></ul>

	<p>Sit on a chair or on the floor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Put the inner borders of your big toes together.</li> <li>• Press the inner borders of your big toes together.</li> <li>• Hold for 10 seconds.</li> <li>• Repeat 10 times.</li> </ul> <p><b>Or</b></p> <p>Sit on the floor or on a chair:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Put a rubber exercise band around your foot.</li> <li>• Turn your foot inwards against the resistance of the band as if to look at the sole of your foot.</li> <li>• Hold for 10 seconds.</li> <li>• Repeat 10 times.</li> </ul>
	<p>Sit on a chair or on the floor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cross your feet and put the outer edges of your little toes together.</li> <li>• Press the outer edges of your little toes together.</li> <li>• Hold for 10 seconds.</li> <li>• Repeat 10 times.</li> </ul> <p><b>Or</b></p> <p>Sit on the floor or on a chair:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Put a rubber exercise band around your foot.</li> <li>• Turn the foot outwards against the resistance band, as if to look at the outside of your foot.</li> <li>• Hold for 10 seconds.</li> <li>• Repeat 10 times.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practice standing on one leg.</li> <li>• You may initially need to have fingertip support on the back of a chair or on a work surface.</li> <li>• As your balance improves, repeat this without fingertip support.</li> <li>• Hold for 10 seconds.</li> <li>• Repeat 10 times.</li> </ul>

Exercise pictures provided by © Physio Tools Ltd.

**Please note:** During the above exercises, you should not push into pain but mild discomfort is acceptable. As is usual with any new exercise, your muscles may ache and you may experience new aches and pains for a few days; these should settle.

## **What should I expect after my boot is removed?**

- It's normal for your ankle to feel quite uncomfortable when the boot is initially removed.
- Your skin may be dry and flaky. Massaging your foot and ankle with plain moisturiser or body lotion may help with this and make your foot more comfortable to complete your exercises.
- Soaking your foot and ankle in warm water may help to reduce the pain and makes moving your ankle easier, so exercising in water may be a more comfortable way of doing your exercises

## **Pain or discomfort**

- It is normal to get some pain and discomfort after your fracture. If you have been given painkillers, you should take them as prescribed. By managing your pain it will allow you to complete your exercises and walk more comfortably.
- If your pain is severe or continuous or you develop a painful, swollen calf, you should contact your GP.

## **Swelling**

- Swelling after breaking your ankle is normal and this may remain for up to one year post fracture. This does not mean there is anything wrong with your ankle.
- Swelling can reduce your ability to move your ankle and make it uncomfortable.
- Try the following to minimise the swelling:
  - When you are resting, sit with your leg up to elevate your foot.
  - At night rest your foot on some pillows so that it is above the level of your heart.
  - You may also wish to use ice to help manage your pain and swelling: see page 2.

## **Stiffness**

- It is important to try to move your ankle as much as possible after your fracture has healed to allow you to regain full function.
- Completing your exercises and walking will help to reduce stiffness,

## **Weakness**

- Your ankle will feel weak and wobbly after your boot has been removed as you haven't used it properly while you have been immobilised.
- You should gradually increase how much you use your ankle and how much you walk but be guided by your pain.

## **Frequently asked questions (FAQs)**

### ***Why does my ankle look a funny shape?***

- As a fracture heals, new bone is formed at the site of the break in the bone and might create a lump on the side of your ankle. This is normal and your ankle may change shape again over 12-18 months as the bone remodels itself.

### ***When can I start driving?***

- When you have sufficient movement and strength to be able to control the pedals. You must be able to perform an emergency stop safely and pain free. This will vary between individuals but is usually a few weeks after removal of the boot. This is the advice given by the Driver & Vehicle Licensing Agency.

### ***Should I stop my exercises if my ankle swells or aches?***

- You should expect slight increase in discomfort and swelling initially when doing your exercises. This should settle however within a short time of finishing your exercises. You may need to take your painkillers initially to allow you to do your exercises comfortably.

## **Useful numbers and contacts**

Orthopaedics Administrative Team (CAT5)      0118 322 7415 or email [rbb-tr.cat5@nhs.net](mailto:rbb-tr.cat5@nhs.net)  
Trauma Nurse Practitioners                      0118 322 8925

To find out more about our Trust visit [www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk](http://www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk)

**Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.**

Created in collaboration with D Burden, Orthopaedic Physiotherapy Specialist & J Miller, Advanced Trauma Nurse Practitioner RBFT Orthopaedic Unit, January 2026.

Next review due: January 2028.