

## Virtual Fracture Clinic

# Weber B ankle fracture

## Information for patients, relatives and carers

### Introduction

The Virtual Fracture Clinic (VFC) helps you recover from your injury without needing to come back to the hospital. This is called self-management.

Use the rehabilitation plan in this leaflet to guide your recovery.

### Video about your injury and recovery

Watch this video to help your recovery. A doctor explains your injury and a physiotherapist shows how to do the exercises:

[www.fracturecare.co.uk/care-plans/ankle/weber-b-fracture/](http://www.fracturecare.co.uk/care-plans/ankle/weber-b-fracture/)

### What is a Weber B ankle fracture?

This is a break to the bone on the outside of your ankle.

### What symptoms can I expect?

Your ankle may be swollen and painful. Swelling is often worse at the end of the day.

It is normal to have mild pain and swelling for 6 to 12 months after your injury.

You can help reduce pain and swelling by:

- taking pain medication
- raising your ankle on a stool or cushions above the level of your hip (elevating)
- using ice or cold packs



Ankle raised and wrapped in a cold pack to reduce pain and swelling

### How long will it take to heal?

It can take up to 6 to 12 weeks for the fracture to heal.

**Smoking** slows down your healing. So, we advise that you stop smoking (including vaping) while your fracture heals. Talk to your GP or go to [nhs.uk/better-health/quit-smoking/](http://nhs.uk/better-health/quit-smoking/)

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## Walking and your boot

The boot protects your ankle and will make you more comfortable.

Wear the boot when you are standing and walking.

You can take it off at night and at rest.

You will be told when to stop using your boot at your fracture clinic appointment.

## Exercises

It is important to start exercises as soon as possible. Good rehabilitation will improve your recovery.

You can expect some discomfort at first. Do not continue if the pain gets worse and you cannot tolerate it.

Follow the instructions on the next pages.

## Follow up

There is a small chance that this fracture can move (displace). This may need an operation.

You will have a weight bearing X-ray when you see a specialist, normally 1 to 2 weeks after your injury. The specialist will explain the results and the next stage of your care.

## Caring for your injury: weeks 1 to 6

**Remember to wear your boot whenever standing and walking.** You can remove the boot when resting and at night. Wear a long sock in your boot.

You will be told when to stop wearing the boot at your appointment.

**Using a cold pack will help with your pain and swelling.**

- use an ice pack or bag of frozen peas wrapped in a damp towel
- put this on your ankle for up to 15 minutes every few hours
- make sure the ice is not in direct contact with your skin

**Try to rest your ankle**, especially in the first 24 to 72 hours. Raise your ankle on a stool or cushions so that it is above the level of your hip. This will help to reduce your swelling.

## Exercises

**It's important to move your ankle and foot as soon as you can.** This promotes circulation and reduces the risk of developing a blood clot (deep vein thrombosis).



The boot protects your ankle. Wearing it will make you more comfortable

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Do these exercises 3 to 4 times a day. Start straight away, working within your pain levels.



**Point your foot up and down.** Repeat 10 times.



**With your heels together, move your toes apart to turn the foot outwards.** Repeat 10 times. Do this movement gently so you remain comfortable.



**Make gentle circles with your foot in one direction and then the other direction.**

Repeat 10 times.

## Caring for your injury: weeks 6 to 12

**It is normal to still have mild discomfort and swelling.** This may continue for 6 to 12 months.

### Activity and exercise

Gradually increase your level of activity. You should avoid impact activity for 3 months. This includes running, jumping and dancing.

You can now progress your exercises.

## Stretches



**Sit with your leg straight out in front of you.** Put a towel or bandage around your foot and pull it towards you.

Feel a stretch in the back of the calf.

Hold for 30 seconds.



**Point your toes down as far as they go.** Place your other foot on top and apply some pressure.

This will stretch the top of your foot.

Hold for 30 seconds.

## Balance

**Level 1:** These exercises are for people who could not stand on one leg before their injury.



**Stand with your feet as close together as possible.**

Hold onto a firm support in safe space. Hold your balance for 30 seconds

**Now try removing your hand.** Try to keep your balance for 30 seconds



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**Level 2:** These exercises are for people who could stand on one leg before their injury.



**1. Hold onto a firm surface in a safe space. Try to stand on one leg.** Hold this for 30 seconds. Stop if you experience pain. When you can do this comfortably, try the next exercise.

**2. Try to stand on one leg without holding on to a support.** Try to hold this for 30 seconds. When you can do this comfortably, try the next exercise.

**3. You can try these exercises with your eyes closed.** Make sure you are always in a safe environment with a support to hold if needed.

**Contact the VFC if you are struggling to recover your movement or return to activity**

## Frequently asked questions

### **It's hard for me to walk in my boot. What do I do?**

The boot has a thicker sole than normal shoes. This can make you feel uneven. Make sure you wear a supportive shoe or trainer on your uninjured foot. This will reduce stress on other joints. For more advice, contact the VFC.

### **I am diabetic. Is it ok for me to wear a boot?**

If you are diabetic, please contact us to discuss your boot. This is particularly important if you have problems with your skin or sensation. We may provide you with a specialist diabetic boot.

### **When can I drive again?**

You can return to driving when:

- you are no longer using your boot
- you can walk comfortably and
- you can perform an emergency stop pain free

Always test how well you can drive in a safe place first.

### **How can I get a 'fit note' for work?**

Ask your GP for a 'fitness for work' statement. You can give this to your employer.

### **What do I do with my crutches and boot when I no longer need them?**

Please return your crutches to the fracture clinic or to A&E. They can be refurbished and reused. Your boot cannot be used again, so you do not need to return it.

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## Contact the VFC

**We're here to help if you've got concerns about your injury, symptoms or exercises.**

**Call us on** 077 7455 5354 (Monday to Friday between 09.00 and 17.00).

Or you can **email** [imperial.vfc@nhs.net](mailto:imperial.vfc@nhs.net).

So, please contact us if you:

- have any concerns about your injury or symptoms
- cannot follow this rehabilitation plan
- are expecting an appointment letter and have not received it
- need help with your boot, brace or sling

## How do I make a comment about my visit?

We aim to provide the best possible service. Staff will be happy to answer your questions. So, if you have **suggestions** or **comments** about your visit, please talk to a member of staff. Or you can contact the patient advice and liaison service (**PALS**). Call **020 3312 7777** (10.00 – 16.00, Monday to Friday) or email PALS at [imperial.pals@nhs.net](mailto:imperial.pals@nhs.net)

The PALS team will listen to your concerns and is often able to help solve problems on your behalf.

Or, to complain, contact our complaints department:

Call **020 3312 1337 / 1349** or email: [ICHC-tr.Complaints@nhs.net](mailto:ICHC-tr.Complaints@nhs.net)

**Or write to:** Complaints department, fourth floor, Salton House, St Mary's Hospital, Praed Street, London W2 1NY

## Alternative formats

This leaflet can be provided on request in large print or easy read, as a sound recording, in Braille or in alternative languages. Please email the communications team: [imperial.communications@nhs.net](mailto:imperial.communications@nhs.net)