

Patient Information Sheet – 44A

Simple Ankle Fracture

What do I need to know?

What is my diagnosis?

You have fractured (broken) the bone on the outside of your ankle. The bone is called the **fibula**.

These injuries almost always heal **without the need for any intervention or surgery**.

You may have been given a tubigrip stocking or a supportive Velcro boot, often called a “moon boot”. You are allowed to put all your weight through your ankle.



What happens next?

- Your X-rays and notes will be checked by a Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon

If nothing further is needed, we will not contact you

- If any other treatment or assessment is needed we will contact you by telephone or post
- Please ensure the Emergency Department/Minor Injury Unit reception staff have your mobile and phone home numbers.
- Occasionally you will receive a telephone consultation or fracture clinic appointment

What can I expect during my recovery?

- The pain begins to settle after a few weeks
- The injury will heal over the course of **6 weeks** but may have some aching for up to **3 months**
- You **do not have to wear** the moon boot once the pain begins to improve
- For some people the boot is only needed for one week, in others it may be needed to provide support for 4 weeks.
- Remove the boot every day to move your ankle and foot (see the exercises overleaf)
- Regaining a full range of movement as soon as possible will speed up your recovery
- Most people return to desk work by **1 to 2 weeks**, but manual work may not be possible for **4 to 6 weeks** depending on your symptoms
- There is **no specific time you can drive again**. It is **illegal** to drive when wearing a sling, splint, cast or moonboot. As you recover, it is your legal responsibility to be certain before you return to driving that you are able to control your vehicle normally and safely.

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Key exercises (three times a day)

Ankle bending and straightening

- As soon as you can, remove the boot and begin to move your ankle up and down
- When the pain begins to settle, use a towel around your foot to pull up and stretch your calf



Ankle in and ankle out

- While seated lift your foot
- Move the ankle in the way then out the way



What if I have a problem?

Very occasionally some patients have difficulties with ongoing pain or stiffness. If you have any issues beyond **three months** after injury please contact us on the details below.

Get in touch

Please get in touch via our trauma email if you have any queries about your injury:

traumaenquiriesRIE@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk

Helpline Monday-Friday (8am – 4pm): 0131 242 3410

Urgent issues

Please call the department where you were initially seen about your injury:

- **RIE Minor Injuries Unit:** 0131 242 3942 (8am – midnight, if after midnight contact RIE Emergency Department 0131 242 1300)
- **WGH Minor Injuries Clinic:** 0131 537 3468 (9am – 8.30pm)
- **SJH Emergency Department:** 01506 523 011 (24 hours)