

After surgery on the shin bone: nail or plate

After surgery on a broken bone



Count the weeks from the day of your operation. The date is on your discharge card.

If your doctor wrote a different plan on your prescription, follow that instead of this page.

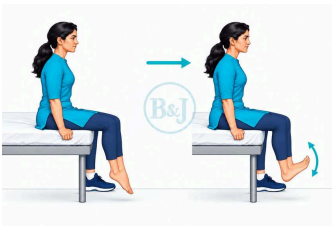
Weeks 0–2

Bring the swelling down: rest with the ankle above the hip and the knee straight. Keep the ankle moving.

Weight bearing

Nail Full, as comfortable, with a walker, unless we tell you otherwise.

Plate As written on your prescription.



Ankle pumps

Pump the feet up and down to keep the blood moving.

10 times

Every hour

✓ **Should feel**
The calf working

✗ **Should not feel**
Calf pain or swelling — tell us



Towel toe curls

Scrunch a towel with the toes.

10 times

3 times a day

✓ **Should feel**
The foot muscles working

✗ **Should not feel**
Cramp



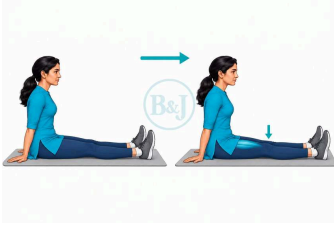
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Quad sets

Sit with the leg straight. Press the back of the knee down and tighten the thigh.

Hold 5 seconds

10 times

3 times a day

✓ **Should feel**

The thigh muscle tightening

✗ **Should not feel**

Knee pain



Straight leg raise

Lie down, one knee bent. Keep the other knee straight and lift the leg 20 cm.

Hold 5 seconds

10 times

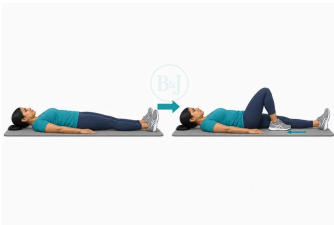
3 times a day

✓ **Should feel**

The thigh working

✗ **Should not feel**

The knee bending or back pain



Heel slides

Lie down and slide the heel up towards the buttock, bending the knee as far as you can.

10 times

3 times a day

✓ **Should feel**

A stretch as the knee bends

✗ **Should not feel**

Sharp pain at the wound



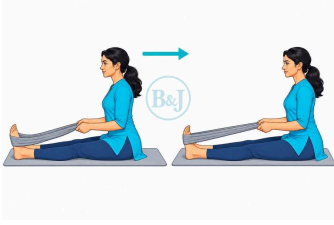
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Towel calf stretch, sitting

Sit with the leg straight. Loop a towel round the ball of the foot and pull the toes towards you.

Hold 30 seconds

3 times

3 times a day

✓ Should feel

A stretch in the calf

X Should not feel

Sharp pain

Not yet Letting the leg hang down for long, a pillow under the knee, or driving.

Move to the next stage only after we have seen you, and the X-ray if one was planned.



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Weeks 2–6

Full ankle and knee movement; walk with support. Carry on with the earlier exercises.

Weight bearing

Nail Full. Move from the walker to crutches.

Plate As written on your prescription. It increases as the X-ray shows healing.



Ankle circles

Move the ankle slowly in circles both ways.

10 each way

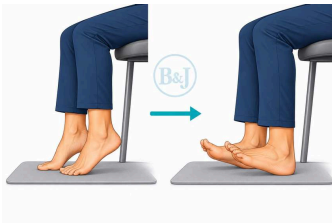
3 times a day

✓ Should feel

The ankle loosening

✗ Should not feel

Sharp pain



Sitting heel and toe raises

Sit with both feet flat on the floor. Lift the heels, lower them, then lift the toes.

10 times

3 times a day

✓ Should feel

The calf and the front of the shin working

✗ Should not feel

Sharp pain



Standing hip abduction

Hold a chair. Lift the leg out to the side, keeping the body upright.

10 times

Daily each side

✓ Should feel

The side of the hip working

✗ Should not feel

Leaning over



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Standing hip extension

Hold a chair. Take the leg backwards, keeping it straight.

10 times

Daily each side

✓ **Should feel**

The buttock working

✗ **Should not feel**

Arching the back

Not yet Running, jumping, or kneeling on the operated knee.

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Weeks 6–12

Walk without a limp; build calf strength and balance. Carry on with the earlier exercises.

Weight bearing

Nail Full. Cut down the walking aids.

Plate As written on your prescription, as the X-ray allows.



Calf raises

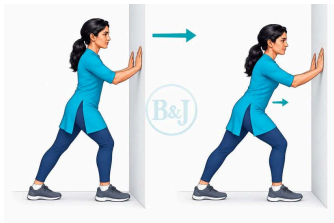
Rise onto both toes and lower under control.

15 times

Daily

✓ **Should feel**
The calf working

✗ **Should not feel**
Sharp pain



Calf stretch, knee straight

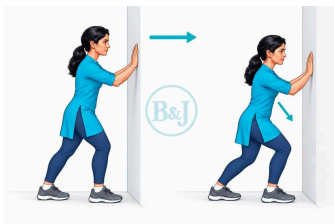
Hands on a wall, back leg straight, heel down.

Hold 30 seconds

3 times

✓ **Should feel**
A stretch in the upper calf

✗ **Should not feel**
Pain in the heel



Calf stretch, knee bent

The same position but bend the back knee slightly.

Hold 30 seconds

3 times

✓ **Should feel**
A stretch lower down

✗ **Should not feel**
Sharp pain



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Single-leg balance

Stand on one leg beside a worktop.

30 seconds

3 times a day

✓ **Should feel**

Working to stay steady

✗ **Should not feel**

Losing balance — hold on



Heel-to-toe walking

Walk heel to toe along a line, beside a support.

10 steps

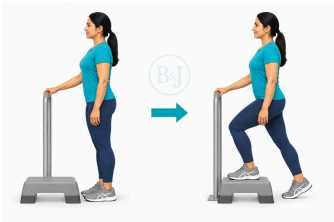
Daily

✓ **Should feel**

Steadier walking

✗ **Should not feel**

Wobbling — use the wall



Step-up

Hold a rail. Step up onto a low step with the operated leg, then step down with the other leg.

10 times

Daily

✓ **Should feel**

The thigh working

✗ **Should not feel**

The knee falling inwards



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Step down

Stand on a low step and lower the other heel slowly towards the floor.

10 times

Daily

✓ **Should feel**

Controlled lowering

✗ **Should not feel**

The knee falling inwards



Mini squat

Hold a support and bend the knees a little way.

10 times

Daily

✓ **Should feel**

The thighs working

✗ **Should not feel**

Knee pain

Not yet Running or heavy manual work.

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Week 12 onwards

Back to work and sport, as the X-ray shows. Carry on with the third-stage exercises.

Weight bearing Full.



Static cycling

Set the seat high, so the knee is almost straight at the bottom. Pedal gently with little resistance.

10 minutes

Daily

✓ Should feel

The knee moving freely

✗ Should not feel

Pain in the knee or hip

Not yet Contact sport until we clear you.

Stop and telephone us if

- Sudden breathlessness or chest pain — go to the nearest hospital
- Pain that keeps getting worse despite the painkillers, or is much worse when you move the toes
- The leg becomes very swollen, tight or hard
- The calf becomes swollen, tight or painful
- The foot becomes numb, cold, pale or blue
- Wound redness, discharge or fever
- A new snap, or the leg gives way



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