

Ankle Exercise Program for Athletes

- A. **First Stage** (check range of motion)
1. **Flexion**- flex foot as far as possible, point toes upward
 2. **Extension**- extend foot as far as possible, point toes downward.
 3. **Inversion**- turn soles of feet inwards.
 4. **Eversion**- turn soles of feet outward
- B. If the above exercises can be done in full range of motion and without pain, do the following exercises:
1. **Foot Circles**- foot circumscribes a small circle. Ball of foot down first, then in, up, and finally out.
 2. **Alphabet**- sitting on table with knee straight and only ankle extended over the end of the table print in capital letters the entire alphabet with your foot.
- C. If the above exercises can be done in full range of motion and without pain, do the following exercises:
1. **Stand** on the affected foot alone for 10 seconds on a firm flat surface. A strength returns lengthen the time to 30 seconds, then 60 seconds. Then stand on one foot on progressively less stable surfaces, such as a thin rug, then thicker rug, then on 1" foam.
 2. **Walk in sandals** without a heel strap.
 3. **Toe Rises**-stand with feet one foot apart and toes facing in. Rise on toes as high as possible without pain. Also repeat this exercise with toes pointed straight ahead and pointed out.
- D. If the above exercises can be done in full range of motion and without pain, do the following exercises:
1. Repeat range of motion exercises with the trainer giving resistance to the exercises with his hands.
 2. **Hopping Exercise**-First standing on the good leg hop as high as possible. Then repeat on the injured leg.
- E. When the athlete can perform the hopping exercise equally as well as on his good leg and without pain, do the following exercise:
1. Active jogging and walking with ankle strapped*
 - 1a. Walk 25 yards; jog 25 yards.
 - 1b. Walk 25 yards; jog 50 yards.
 - 1c. Walk 25 yards; jog 75 yards.
- (Note: Anytime the athlete limps, stop all running.)
- 2a. Straight Ahead - repeat above walk and jog exercise except at $\frac{1}{2}$ speed.
 - 2b. Straight Ahead - repeat above walk and jog exercise except at $\frac{3}{4}$ speed.
 - 2c. Straight Ahead - repeat previous exercises except at full speed.
2. When the athlete can sprint at full speed and without a limp, then have him/her run circles both clockwise and counter clockwise. Start with large circles and work down in size.
 3. When the athlete can run circles at full speed without a limp and without pain, then have her/him run figure eight's.
 4. When the athlete can run figure eight's at full speed without a limp and without pain, then have him/her run a zig-zag course the length of the football field.
 5. Finally the last step is to test the athlete on right angle quick cuts both to the right and left. When she/he can do this they are ready for competition and practice.

All exercises should be repeated at least ten or more times daily.

*When the athlete starts jogging with his/her ankle strapped, the athlete can do all previous exercises at home on their own with the trainer checking twice a week on these exercises.

