

The text 'OCATs' in a large, grey, sans-serif font, centered within a white circle that has a subtle drop shadow.

# Musculoskeletal Physiotherapy OCATs

Health Services at Wolves

## Ankle Strengthening Exercises

# Guidance

- You have been provided with these exercises to help improve your ankle symptoms.
- These exercises are intended to assist with strengthening your foot & ankle muscles through the rehabilitation process.
- These exercises are intended as a guide and prior to starting you should have had some instruction from your Physiotherapist at OCATS.
- The sets and reps outlined in this leaflet are intended as a guide – you may wish to do less or more, but can progress these at your own pace.
- If you experience worsening symptoms while completing the exercises you may want to seek guidance from your Physiotherapist at OCATS.
- Progress at your own pace, as your pain/stiffness allows, under the supervision/guidance of your Physiotherapist at OCATS.

# Towel Scrunches

While sitting, place your foot on a towel on the floor. Scrunch the towel towards you with your toes.

Hold the toe scrunch contraction for 3-5s.

Then use your toes to push the towel away from you.

To make this exercise more challenging

You can put a small weight on the far end of the towel such as a tin or water bottle.

**Repeat for 10 times**

**Repeat little and often throughout the day**



# Isometric (No movement) Ankle Eversion

While seated, place the outside of the symptomatic foot against a wall with a towel / pillow between your foot and the wall.

Push outwards with your foot into the wall (your ankle joint should not move) causing a contraction of your muscles on the outside of your lower leg.

**Hold for 15-30 seconds**  
**Repeat 5 times**  
**Repeat 4 sets a day**



# Isometric (No movement) Ankle Inversion

While seated, place the inside of your foot against a table leg or inside of a door frame with a towel / pillow between your foot and the table leg/door frame.

Push your foot inwards against the table leg (your ankle joint should not move too much).

**Hold for 15-30 seconds**  
**Repeat 5 times**  
**Repeat 4 sets a day**



# Plantar flexion with resistance band

Sitting in a chair with your leg outstretched in front of you. Loop the band around your foot. Moving only your ankle, point your foot forward (while keeping your knee straight).

You may feel tightness in your calf muscle behind your lower leg. Continue until you feel discomfort or can't move it any further. Hold this position for two seconds. Slowly return back to the start position.

**Repeat 12-20 times**  
**Repeat 4-5 times a day as able**



# Dorsiflexion with resistance band

Place a looped resistance band around your foot and a heavy chair or table leg. Moving only your ankle, pull your toes back towards your shin (while keeping your knees straight). Continue until you feel discomfort or can't move it back any further.

Hold this position for two seconds and slowly release.

Return to the starting position, and then repeat the exercise.



**Repeat 12-20 times**

**Repeat 4-5 times a day as able**

# Eversion with Resistance Band

Sitting on a chair with your feet on the floor. Loop the resistance band around both feet whilst holding both ends of the band in your hands.

Try to move your symptomatic foot up and outwards against the resistance of the band.

Hold for 1-3 seconds then slowly control the ankle back to the starting position.

Make sure only your ankle is moving and not the whole leg.

Start



Finish



**Repeat 6-12 reps**  
**Repeat 4-5 times a day as able**

# Inversion with Resistance Band

Place the looped resistance band on your symptomatic foot whilst holding the band in one hand out to the side.

Try to move your symptomatic foot down and inwards against the resistance of the band.

Hold for 1-3 second then slowly control the ankle back to the starting position.

Make sure only your ankle is moving and not the whole leg.

**Start**

**Finish**



**Repeat 6-12 reps**  
**Repeat 4-5 times a day as able**

# Tibialis Posterior with Resistance Band

Place a resistance band around your forefoot. Put two little markers down (e.g tape or pens) as a guide to where your foot will move to and from. Tie the band to a heavy table / chair leg or hold it out to the side away from your body.

Keep your foot on the floor and move your foot between the two pieces of tape. Try to keep your upper leg still during this exercise.

**N.B. this exercise has been proven to work better and activate the correct muscles more if you perform it wearing your shoe.**

Start

Finish



Repeat 6-12 reps  
Repeat 4-5 times a day as able

# 1. Seated Soleus Raises

## 2. Seated Toe Taps

1. Sit down with your knees bent to 90 degrees right angle with your feet flat on the floor.  
Raise your heels up and down as quick as comfortable.

Rest

2. With your feet flat on the floor  
Now perform a tapping motion with each foot  
Raising your toes up and down

**Perform each exercise for 30-60seconds**  
**Repeat 4-5 times a day as able**



# Weighted Soleus Raises – off the edge of a step

Sitting down with your knees bent to 90 degree right angle with your forefoot on the edge of a step / books or equivalent.

Place a weight / heavy box / books or equivalent on your knees.

Push up on your toes as far as you can Comfortably.

Hold for 2 seconds at the top of the movement. Slowly return back to the starting position.

**Start**

**Finish**



**Repeat 10-15 reps**  
**Repeat 4-5 times a day as able**

# Standing Calf Raises

Holding onto a chair for support.  
Push up on your toes in Standing.  
Hold for 2 seconds at the top of the movement.  
Slowly return back to the starting Position.

**Repeat 10-15 reps**  
**Repeat 4-5 times a day as able**

**Start**



**Finish**



# Standing Calf Raise off the edge of a step

Stand on edge of step or stairs.

Perform a calf raise lifting your heels up as far as you can comfortably, hold for 2 seconds at the top of the movement.

Slowly lower down to the starting position.

**Repeat 10-15 reps**  
**Repeat 4-5 times a day as able**

**Start**



**Finish**



# Weighted Calf Raises off the edge of a step

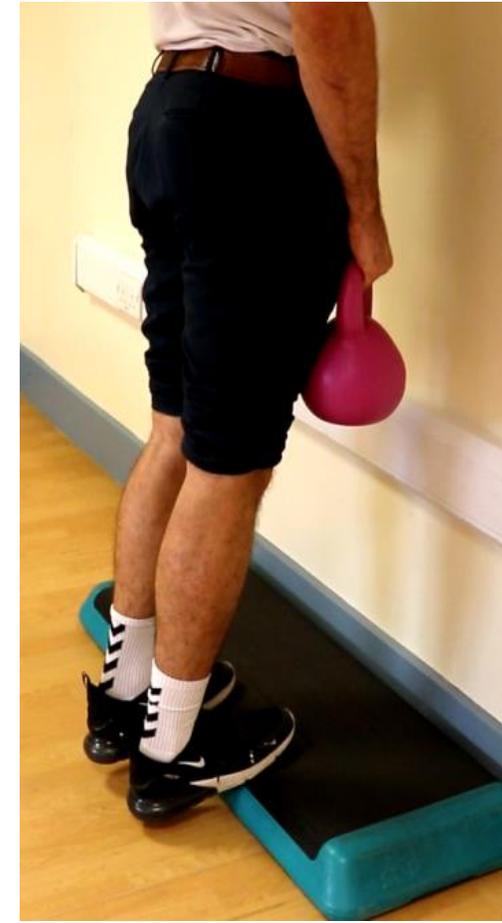
Stand on edge of step or stairs.  
Hold a weight in one of your hands, hold onto the wall / banister with your other hand for balance.

Perform a calf raise lifting your heels up as far as you can comfortably, hold for 2 seconds at the top of the movement.

Slowly lower down to the starting position.

**Repeat 10-15 reps**  
**Repeat 4-5 times a day as able**

**Start**



**Finish**



# Single leg Calf Raise

Stand on the floor holding onto chair / kitchen work surface.  
Lift one leg up so its off the ground.

Then perform a single leg calf raise lifting your heel off the floor, hold for 2 seconds at the top of the movement.

Slowly lower down to the starting position.

**Start**



**Finish**



**Repeat 6-8 reps**  
**Repeat 4-5 times a day as able**

# Single leg Calf Raise off the edge of a step

Stand with one leg on the edge of step or stairs. The other leg you are not working can either be lifted out to the side or tucked behind your other ankle.

Perform a single leg calf raise lifting your heel up as far as you can comfortably, hold for 2 seconds at the top of the movement.

Slowly lower down to the starting position.

**Start**



**Finish**



**Repeat 6-8 reps**  
**Repeat 4-5 times a day as able**

# Single leg Balance



Stand on one leg attempting to balance gripping your toes into the floor.

Hold onto a chair or work surface with finger tips if required.

Do this as often as you can throughout the day e,g washing up, waiting for the kettle to boil, brushing teeth, making tea, at work whenever you get the opportunity.

**Repeat 6-8 reps**  
**Repeat 4-5 times a day as**  
**able**

# Final thoughts

- If you feel unwell or the exercises cause significant pain, please stop and rest. If this continues discuss it with your physiotherapist.
- If you have any questions or concerns about any of the information detailed in this leaflet please contact the department using the following details.