

Ref: L63

**Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust
Virtual Fracture Clinic**

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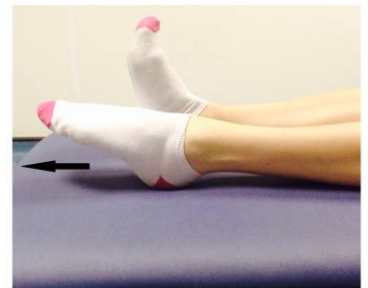
Email bht.fractureclinic@nhs.net

Dear Patient,

This is an information leaflet explaining the ongoing management of your Achilles injury. Your case history and scans have been reviewed by an Orthopaedic Consultant (Bone Specialist) and a Senior Fracture Clinic Physiotherapist.

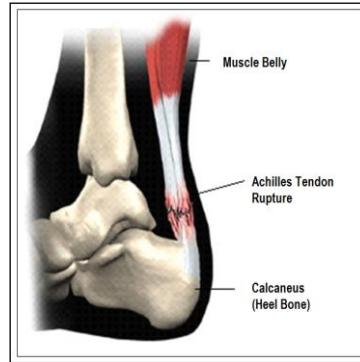
You have a suspected rupture to your Achilles tendon: you need an ultrasound scan, US(S).

- Healing:** This soft tissue injury normally takes about 9-12 weeks to heal.
- Pain and swelling:** Take pain relief as prescribed: it is likely to be painful for several months. Swelling is often worst at the end of the day. Elevating the foot will help.
- Using your ankle:** You **must** use the boot with the wedges until we confirm the diagnosis. Ensure the wedges are underneath the grey liner of the boot. Keep the boot on day and night/in bed. **Do not** put any weight on your foot (for example standing or walking on it) unless advised by the team. Avoid any temptation to stretch the calf or weight bear without the boot as this could mean the tendon heals in an elongated position, which will affect your overall rehabilitation by possibly making it weaker.
- Personal hygiene:** You **must** remove your boot and sock daily to check the skin on your foot for any soreness that may be caused by excessive pressure or tightness. You may remove the boot carefully for washing and changing your sock once a day. You must **keep the toes pointed down** when doing this, as demonstrated in the picture. If you want to shower, cover the boot with a polyethylene carrier bag/waterproof cover and be cautious, DO NOT remove the boot to shower.



Follow up: You have been referred to have an **ultrasound scan** to investigate the injury.

Picture of injury:



You will receive a **phone call** from the **Fracture Care Team** for further consultation and advice after your scan, or you may be seen after the scan by the team.

If you have not received an appointment for the scan within 1 week of receiving this letter, then please contact a member of the **Fracture Care Team** either by **phone 01296 255 630** or by email: bht.fractureclinic@nhs.net

Advice for a new injury:

Rest and Elevation

Try to rest the leg for the first 24-72 hours to allow the early stage of healing to begin. Raise your ankle above the level of your hips to reduce the swelling. You can use pillows or a stool to keep your leg up.

Smoking advice:

Medical evidence suggests that smoking prolongs soft tissue healing time. In extreme cases it can stop healing altogether. It is important you consider this with your recent injury.

Stopping smoking during the healing phase of your injury will help ensure optimal recovery.

For advice on smoking cessation and local support available, please refer to the following website: <http://smokefree.nhs.uk> or discuss this with your GP.

Boot advice:

Diabetic patients

If you have diabetes, please contact us to discuss your boot. This is particularly important if you have problems with your skin. We can provide you with a specialist diabetic boot if required.

Footwear for your uninjured foot

We recommend choosing a supportive shoe or trainer with a firm sole for your uninjured foot. You will notice that the boot you have been given has a thicker sole: by matching this height on the uninjured side you will reduce any stress on your other joints. You can do this by getting a shoe balancer available online, this fits easily to the shoe on your un-injured foot.

You have been issued some crutches to help you with your mobility. This YouTube video shows how to use them safely when allowed to put some weight through the injured foot. Remember; don't put any weight on your foot until your team advises you to do so.

YouTube video on using crutches: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EUBiwexUnQU>

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Information on Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT) risk and injections:

Due to the nature of this injury, and its rehabilitation, it is important you **immobilise** the foot in a boot. **This places you in a higher risk group for developing a DVT (blood clot), which could potentially have very serious effects.**

You may have been prescribed a course of **Dalteparin/ Fragmin**, to thin your blood. If you have been prescribed Dalteparin/Fragmin, one of the nurses will have shown you the injection technique and you should try to keep these injections to a regular time of day.

Once your ultrasound scan results have been reviewed

We will advise you if you need to continue Dalteparin/Fragmin. If you have any further questions regarding this, or have a reaction to the medication, please direct this to your GP or district nurse.

Used injection syringes MUST be disposed of safely in the yellow 'Sharps Bin' provided. Once full, sharps bins can possibly be collected from your home by applying for a collection on the Buckinghamshire Council Website, otherwise the clinic team can advise as can the Pharmacy Department in the Trust. It is also possible that your GP surgery may accept these providing the lid (s) are taped down securely and put in a sealed bag.