Suggested exercises
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2. Rotational ankle movements
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3. Calf stretch
   Use a towel to pull your foot upwards until you feel a stretch in your calf. Hold for 20 seconds. Repeat 3 times.

4. Ankle inversion/eversion
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The ankle joint
The ankle is a hinge joint formed by three bones: the talus, the tibia (shinbone) and the fibula.

What is a fracture and how is it treated?
A fracture is a break or crack in a bone. Treatment depends on where and which bones are affected, and the amount of disruption there is to joint stability.

What happens while I am in the cast?
The cast or boot will immobilise the joint and allow bones to heal. It is likely you will be given crutches to walk with, although the amount of weight you can put on the leg will vary between each person, depending on your fracture.

What happens when the cast is removed?
Once the cast is removed, your ankle may feel stiff and painful to move. This is normal and is not because the fracture has not healed. It is because your ankle has been immobilised and is not used to moving. As you start to move the joint again (with exercise) this pain will reduce. On some occasions the cast may be replaced by a boot for a period of time, to provide support but allowing you to start exercising the joint.

Pain
Fractures can be most painful when you start moving the joint after periods of immobilisation. This is normal but should reduce as the joint flexibility increases. Your doctor can prescribe you painkillers, and taking these regularly, as advised, will help you to manage the pain. If your pain becomes severe or constant you should consult your GP.

Swelling
You may notice swelling in your leg and ankle. Ice is commonly used to reduce this. Use an ice pack, frozen peas or ice cubes wrapped in a damp tea towel, for up to 10 to 15 minutes, two to three times a day.

Regular movements of your hip and knee will also help to reduce any swelling, as will raising your foot above the height of your hip for periods of time.

Weakness
Following any period of disuse a joint and the surrounding muscles will become weakened. It is advisable to regain movement prior to working on strengthening exercises in most situations, and you will be guided in this by your doctor or physiotherapist.

General advice following cast removal
Skin often becomes very dry and flaky under a plaster cast, and when it is removed it is advisable to wash and moisturise the area well. If you have a wound, please check that you are able to get this wet. If you have a scar from surgery, firmly massage the area with moisturiser, for a few minutes every day, to ensure a mobile, well-healed scar.
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If the break is small or well-aligned, surgery may not be required. Often your ankle will be immobilised in a plaster cast or boot for six weeks or more.

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