

Overview

The calf muscles are very active during walking, running and even standing still. They raise us up, drive us forward and help stabilise our ankles and legs. This active muscle group often becomes weak following injury, disuse or through the normal aging process.

Calf-strengthening exercises are simple to perform and are an important part of your foot & ankle rehabilitation - They are usually most effective when combined with Calf stretching exercises (*leaflet available*).

Start with level 1 exercises and progress onto level 2 and then 3 when you feel ready.

❑ **Level 1 - Double leg Calf raises**

- Stand on a level surface, feet about 6-inches apart.
- Hold on to a stable surface to maintain balance.
- Slowly raise on to toes, taking 3 seconds to rise and 3 seconds to lower.
- Start with 5 repetitions, 3 times per day.
- Aim to increase this to 20 repetitions, 5 times per day.



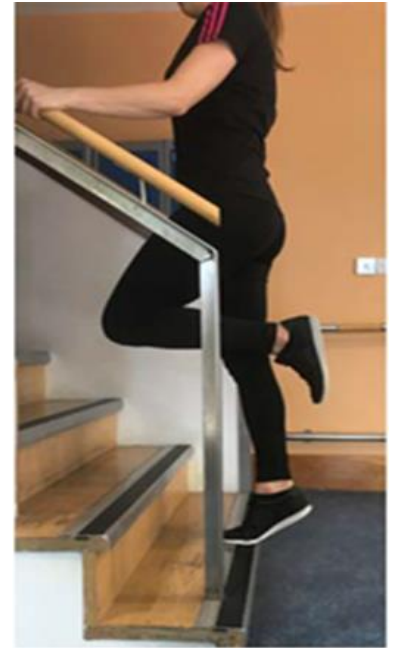
❑ **Level 2 - Single Leg Calf Raises**

- Stand on a level surface, feet about 6-inches apart.
- Hold on to a stable surface to maintain balance.
- Take your weight on to one foot.
- Slowly raise on to toes, taking 3 seconds to rise and 3 seconds to lower.
- Start with 5 repetitions on both feet. 3 times per day.
- Aim to increase this to 20 repetitions on both feet, 5 times per day.



□ **Level 3 – Single leg step - calf raises**

- Stand on a step or stairs with feet 6-inches apart and holding on for support.
- Place the ball of your one foot on the edge of the step so that your heel is over hanging.
- Take your weight on to the overhanging foot – this is your start position.
- Raise up onto your toes taking 3 seconds to lift up – hold for 3 seconds – and 3 seconds to lower back to starting position.
- Do not allow your heels to drop below the level of the step.
- Start with 5 repetitions on each leg, 3 times per day.
- Aim to increase this to 15 -20 repetitions on each leg, 4 times per day.



Note: It will be normal to feel mild discomfort during the exercises and often the few days following – especially when you first start off. If you experience new pain that does not settle by the next day – stop the exercises for a few days to recover and start again at a lower level.

If you are concerned about pain or difficulty following these exercises contact The Podiatry and Orthotics Department for further advice on 01633615225 or email risca.podiatry@wales.nhs.uk

**“This document is available in Welsh /
Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg”.**