

# Intrinsic Foot Exercises

“There is no influence like the influence of habit.” - Gilbert Parker



## Why Exercise?

Just like you would drum your fingers on a table it can be a good habit to move your toes around whenever you are sitting for a few minutes each time. There are 29 muscles in your foot that all provide stability to your foundation. When we experience foot pain, it can often be attributed to weak or stiff intrinsic foot muscles. Even for those who exercise regularly, we often forget to focus on the little motions that can make a big difference.

Maintaining your foot mobility, flexibility, and strength can reduce foot discomfort and add to your overall longevity.

These exercises can be done a few times throughout the day for a few minutes each day. Most do not require any specific equipment but a hand towel or tension band can be incorporated to add resistance.

Being able to focus on the little movements of your foot can restore strength and agility to your foundation.

## Optional Equipment

Towel	Resistance Band	Chair	Yoga Mat
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## Exercises

- **Passive Movement**

- If you can easily reach your foot, moving it around with your hands can help loosen some tightness. If you cannot reach with your hand, a towel can be used.
- Sitting in a chair, cross your leg over the other and bring your foot up so you can hold it. Try to relax your foot so you can easily move it around.
- With your hands, hold the ball of the foot and move your ankle in circles and in all directions.
- Next, move your toes around, up and down. Try to spread and stretch the toes away from its neighbor
- Wring and Stretch the midfoot. Pushing up on the ball of your foot near your little toe while pushing down on the joint of your big toe, twist your foot (pronation). Next switch and push up on the ball of your foot at the big toe while pushing down on the joint of your little toe, twist your foot (supination).

## Exercises Continued

- Calf Raises

- Standing and holding a wall or secure counter. Alternatively you can do this sitting
  - Starting with your foot flat on the floor, raise your heel up while you keep your toes on the floor.
  - The toes will be in an extended position. Try to keep the bottom of your toes on the floor.
  - Hold this for 10 seconds
  - Relax and Repeat 5-10 times.
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- Ankle Stretch

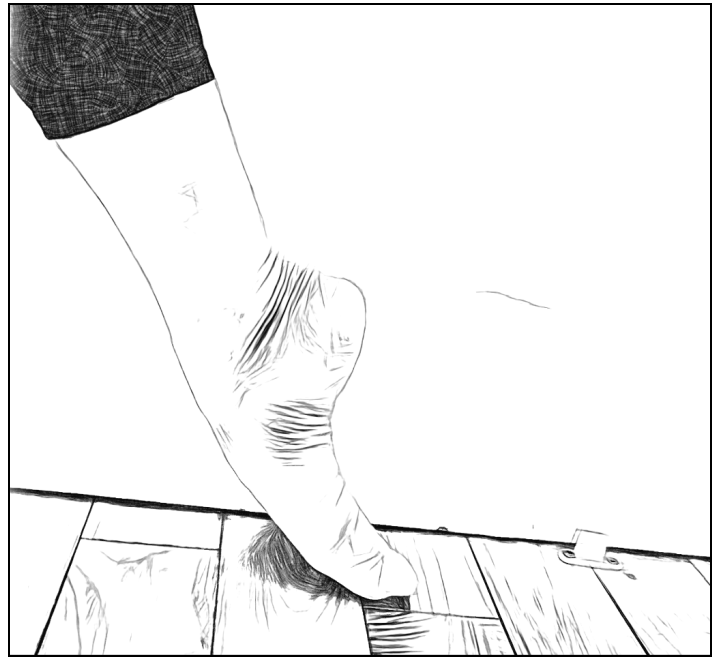
- Standing next to a countertop or secure surface, plant your outside foot slightly in front of you flat on the floor.
- Focusing on the foot closest to your support and keeping your heel on the floor lean over the top of your foot allowing your knee to bend over the foot.
- Lean forward as far as you can go while keeping your heel on the ground.
- Hold this for 5-10 seconds
- Switch sides
- Repeat both sides 5-10 times



## Exercises Continued

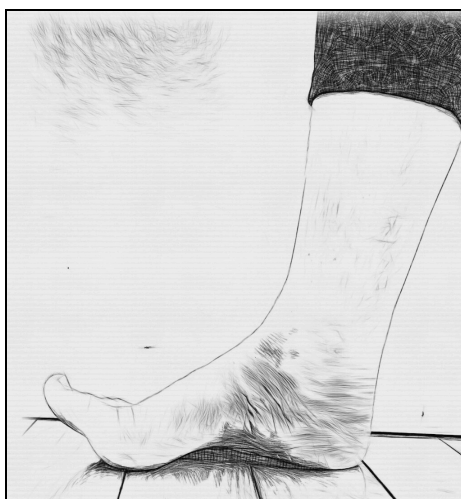
- Front Stretch

- Sitting and Standing, bring your foot back and try to place the tops of your toes toward the floor.
- Press down into the floor until you feel a stretch along the top of your foot and front of your shin.



- Toe Ups and Downs

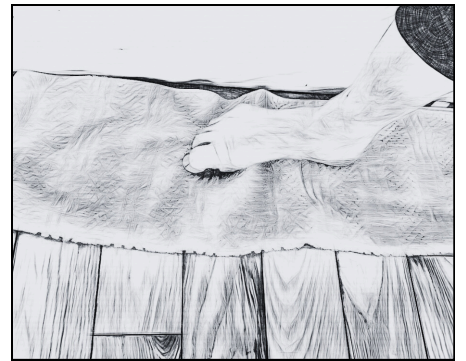
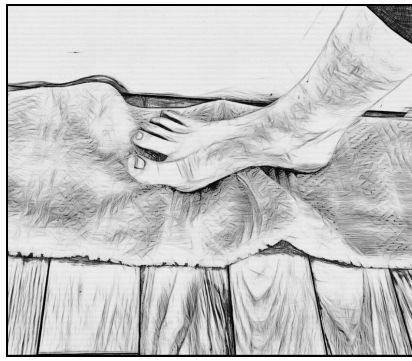
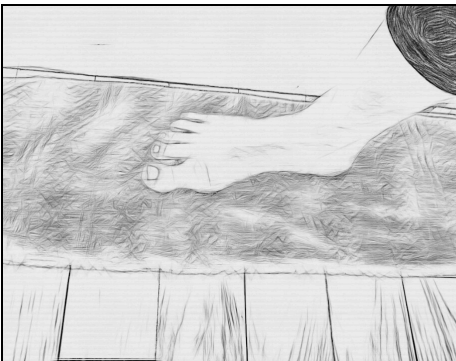
- You can do this before getting out of bed in the morning or sitting in a chair and extend your leg forward so it is resting on the heel. You can do one foot at a time or both feet together.
- Flex your toes (curling or squeezing them toward the ball of your foot) and hold for 2-3 seconds. (We want to avoid pointing your foot down from the ankle. We only want the toes to move.)
- Relax your toes.
- Extend your toes (lifting them toward your shin) and hold for 2-3 seconds
- Repeat this 5-10 times



## Exercises Continued

### • Towel Scrunch

- Place a towel on the floor and your foot on the towel near the bottom.
- Extend and Lift your toes and reach them forward while keeping your heel on the ground.
- Press your toes into the towel and flex / curl your toes under pulling or scrunching the towel under your foot.
- It is ok if the ball of your foot lifts off the floor. Your heel should stay on the floor.
- Relax your foot.
- Repeat 5-10 times



### • Switch Ups

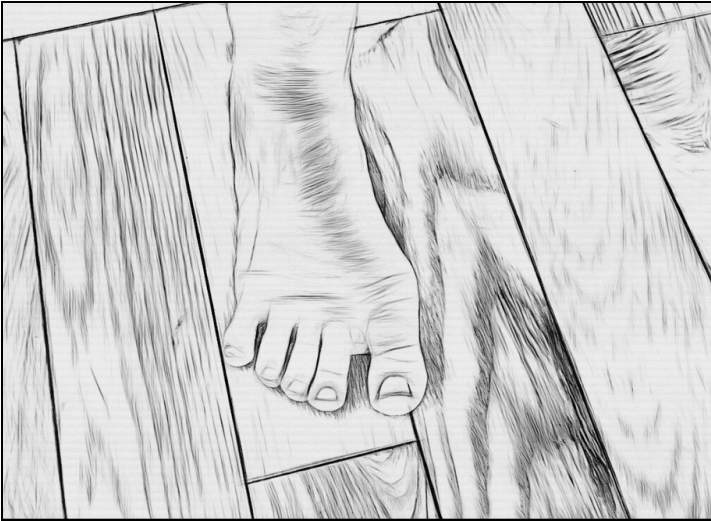
- Sitting or Standing with your foot flat on the floor
- Keep the ball of your foot on the floor.
- Raise just your big toe while keeping your other toes on the floor. Press your other toes into the floor.
- Bring the other toes up with the big toes. It may feel good to splay and stretch all of your toes here.
- Lower just your big toe while keeping your other toes up.
- Lower your other toes and relax.



## Exercises Continued

- Toe Spread

- Sitting down with your foot flat on the floor
- Reach and spread your toes as far apart as possible
- While they are spread, press your toes into the floor without curling them.
- Relax
- Repeat 5-10 times.



We're here to help!

If you have questions or concerns about your foot pain or condition, give our office a call for a free consultation