

Ankle Sprain

It is very easy to turn or twist your ankle in an awkward way and cause a sprain in your ankle. These movements can cause stretching and tearing of the ligaments in the ligaments surrounding the ankle.

Ligaments connect one bone to another and help stabilize joints by preventing excessive movement.

Symptoms

- Pain with weight bearing on the affected ankle.
- Bruising and sometimes swelling of the ankle.
- Limited range-of-motion of the ankle.

See a Doctor

- When you have pain and swelling in your ankle and you suspect a sprain.

Risk Factors

- Sports participation (basketball, football, tennis, soccer, trail running).
- Extra weight.
- Prior ankle injury.

Tests and Diagnosis

- X-ray.
- Bone scan.
- Computerized Tomography (CT).
- Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI).

Treatment and Drugs

- Depends on the severity of the injury.
- Medications - Sometimes over-the-counter pain medicine is all that is needed.
- A medical assessment might be necessary.
- Physical Therapy - After swelling is gone Physical Therapy can help to restore your ankle's flexibility, range-of-motion, balance and strength.
- Other procedures - If the ankle is unstable, it may require a cast or walking boot.



Lifestyle and Home Remedies for Minor Injuries

- Elevate the affected ankle to reduce swelling.
- Ice the area 15-20 minutes immediately and every 2-3 hours up to the first 48 to 72 hours.
- Protect your ankle with an elastic wrap or splint.
- Rest, but don't stop moving. Avoid activities that cause swelling, pain, or discomfort in the ankle.
- Compression helps to stop swelling. Use an elastic bandage. Wrap the bandage starting from furthest part from heart. Remember not to wrap so tightly it cuts off circulation. Loosen the wrap if pain increases, if there is numbness, or if there is swelling below the area wrapped.

Prevention

- Keep extra pounds off.
- Maintain good strength and flexibility.
- Be careful when walking or running on uneven surface.
- Do not wear high-heeled shoes.
- Warm up before you exercise or before playing a sport.
- Practice balance exercises.