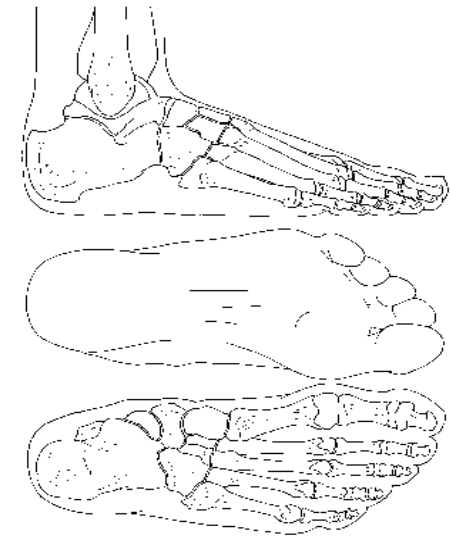


What is an Ankle Sprain?

An ankle sprain occurs by 'rolling' over your ankle. This usually happens during sporting activities such as netball or basketball, or when walking on uneven surfaces.

This rolling action results in some of the ligaments that support your ankle becoming overstretched and torn. The result is usually pain, bleeding and swelling. Unfortunately an ankle sprain is an injury which can become on-going and you must make sure you take preventative measures so it doesn't happen again.



What should I do when I sprain my ankle?

The best way to minimize the effect of an acute ankle sprain is to stick to the RICE first aid method in the first 72 hours.

Rest – relax and take it easy and respect your pain at this stage. Crutches from your local chemist may be useful.

Ice – As soon as you are able, apply cold for 20 minutes every two hours. This may be in the form of an ice pack or frozen peas. Please ensure there is a towel in between the ice and your skin to prevent skin damage.

Compression – Your physiotherapist is able to provide you with a compression bandage to reduce the amount of swelling after injury.

Elevation - As much as possible, raise your ankle up (preferably higher than the level of your heart) which will aid to reduce any excess swelling and also make you rest.

Avoid further damage

Another first aid principle to be aware of which may limit any excess swelling and pain is 'No HARM' within the first 72 hours also:

Heat, Alcohol, Running, Massage = H.A.R.M

What a physio can do?

Management

Research shows that early mobilisation and the use of physiotherapy specific modalities on ankle sprains results in better outcomes in ankle sprains.

Physiotherapy management leads to quicker resolution of symptoms of pain and swelling, improved range of motion and walking speed, earlier return to work or sport, greater comfort, and a reduced risk of recurrence.

Therefore all patients can benefit from physiotherapy, not just those who progress slowly. Also, it is important to see your physiotherapist as soon as possible after your ankle sprain to ensure the quickest recovery.

Treatment Modalities

Early physiotherapy modalities to reduce the impact of pain on swelling on your function include;

- Ultrasound – to help with movement of fluid and stimulate healing.
- Compression bandage – to control swelling.
- Gentle mobilisation exercises – to reduce the risk of any secondary stiffness.
- Education on self-management – explains how you can help yourself at home.

Once the swelling and pain has settled your physiotherapist can help you safely return to sport or work by reducing the risk factors that may predispose you to another strain:

- Manipulation and mobilisation – To address any secondary stiffness that may impact your work/sport and to ensure correct alignment of the healing ligaments.
- Prescription of specific strength and stretching exercises to strengthen the muscles that support your ankle that may have also been damaged in the sprain.
- Taping techniques – to reduce the risk of re-injury by holding the ankle in a neutral position.
- Bracing – ankle braces are to be considered if you may be allergic to taping or you are going to be needing to repetitively tape your ankles for sports like basketball or netball.

Your Problem is:

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Suggested /Planned Management:

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Specific Advice:

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|---------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Exercises | <input type="checkbox"/> Manual therapy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hydrotherapy | <input type="checkbox"/> Balance retraining |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Braces | <input type="checkbox"/> Strength work |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Weight loss | <input type="checkbox"/> Conditioning |

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ANKLE SPRAINS

Helpful Hints

