

Taking Care of Ankle Sprains

Cornerstone Physical Therapy's Justin Weisbrod: Sometimes you can't walk it off.

by Justin Weisbrod
Community contributor

One of the most common injuries in sports and or from falls are ankle sprains. Most people have suffered from some type of ankle sprain at least once in their lifetime. Many times people don't seek formal care following an ankle sprain and generally don't know what should or shouldn't be done to care for the sprain.

There are numerous types of ankle sprains and are graded from one to four with one being the best and four being the worst. This is based on the amount of stretch placed on the ligament and if there are small tears in the ligament. In your ankle you have numerous ligaments on both sides of your ankle joints and depending on which way you roll your ankle this will determine which ligament/s is involved. In general the most

common sprain happens on the outside or lateral portion of the ankle and this is commonly referred to as "rolling your ankle." Most ankle sprains are followed by swelling, pain and in some cases some bruising. This may be immediate however most often are brought on a few hours later.

In caring for ankle sprains it is important to follow the RICE protocol. This means Rest, Ice, Compression and Elevation. Ice is very important and should be placed on immediately. It is also important to also keep moving your ankle; you can do ankle pumps and circles along with spelling out the alphabet with your foot. If you can you should try to put weight on it when you walk however if after a few days if you still are unable to put weight on it or swelling hasn't gone down at all you should seek medical attention.

The true rehab for an ankle starts once swelling has gone down and motion has been restored. Since the ligaments have been stretched out and will not shrink back down the chance of re-injuring it is high. Therefore it is important to work on strengthening and stability training of the ankle to make the other muscles and ligaments stronger to make up for the stretched out ligament.

Justin Weisbrod is the owner and director of Cornerstone Physical Therapy, cornerstone-pt.net. He has a master's of physical therapy. He can be contacted by phone at 740-788-8100.

BY THE NUMBERS Ankle Sprains and the Athlete — American College of Sports Medicine

EACH DAY

25K

Americans suffer from an ankle pain.

STUDIES SHOW

40%

Of ankle sprains are misdiagnosed.

MORE THAN

50%

Of ankle sprains are sports injuries.

ANKLE SPRAINS

3

Are categorized into three grades.

PHYSICAL THERAPY For Ankle Sprains

The use of physical therapy is extremely important in ankle sprains from the beginning to the return to activities.

Physical therapy can help decrease swelling and restore motion immediately and work on advanced stability and strengthening exercises to restore normal activity level and prevent re-injury. —Justin Weisbrod

More than 80 percent of ankle sprains are a result of inversion, or inward rolling, of the ankle. This is commonly experienced in athletic activities that involve running, pivoting and jumping.

—American College of Sports Medicine

Like this story? Tell us why.
hibumagazine.com/survey



Physical therapy can help decrease swelling and restore motion immediately.

Photo courtesy of hibu