

GREENWICH | STAMFORD | ONSMD.COM

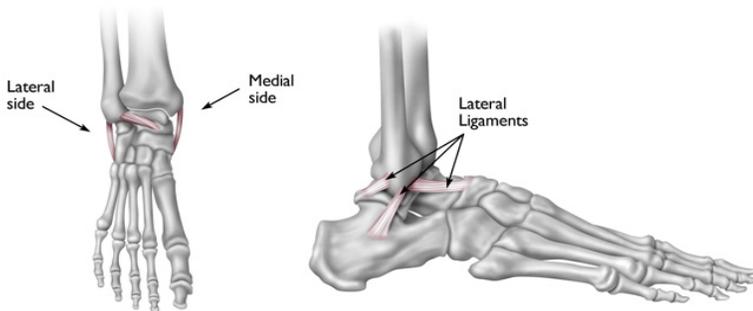
An ankle sprain occurs when the strong ligaments that support the ankle stretch beyond their limits and tear. Ankle sprains are common injuries that occur among people of all ages as a result of the foot rolling or twisting to one side. Sprains range from mild to severe depending upon how much damage there is to the tissues. A sprain can be classified as Grade I (mild), Grade II (moderate) and Grade III (severe).

Most sprains are minor injuries that heal with rest and applying ice. However, if your ankle is very swollen and painful to walk on — or if you are having trouble putting weight on your ankle at all, be sure to see your doctor. In many cases x-rays should be done to rule out a fracture.

Without proper treatment and rehabilitation, a severe sprain can weaken your ankle—making it more likely that you will injure it again. Other ankle sprains can lead to persistent pain or disability if inappropriately treated. Repeated ankle sprains can lead to long-term problems, including chronic ankle pain, arthritis, and ongoing instability.

SYMPTOMS

- Pain
- Bruising
- Tenderness to the touch
- Ankle instability
- A “pop” sensation at the time of injury



An ankle sprain is an injury to one or more of the ligaments that stabilize the ankle.

Reproduced from J Bernstein, ed: Musculoskeletal Medicine. Rosemont, IL, American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons, 2003.

TREATMENT

Almost all ankle sprains can be treated without surgery. Even a complete ligament tear can heal without surgical repair if it is immobilized appropriately. Depending on the severity of the sprain, your physician may wrap the ankle in a bandage or a device for protection and support such as a boot or an air brace. Mild sprains usually resolve within two weeks, while severe injuries can take as long as 12 weeks to recover.

Sprained Ankles require three phases of recovery:

- **Phase 1:** rest, ice, immobilize and elevate the ankle to reduce swelling
- **Phase 2:** restore range of motion, strength and flexibility.
- **Phase 3:** gradual return to activities

Once the swelling and pain have subsided, it is recommended to stretch the ankle in order to restore its range of motion, strength and stability. These exercises should be performed twice a day.

ANKLE STRETCHES



While sitting down, bend the foot upwards and hold for ten seconds. Repeat this stretch 10 times.



Next, move the foot down and inward. Hold this position for 10 seconds and repeat 10 times.



Afterward, from the resting position, move the foot outward. Hold for 10 seconds and repeat 10 times.



Next, point the toes outward and down. Hold this position for 10 seconds and repeat 10 times.



These next two stretches should only be done when the pain is gone.

Stand on the edge of a stair and drop the ankles down. Hold for 10 seconds and repeat 10 times.



Finally, stand 12 inches from a wall. Squat down and hold this position for 10 seconds, repeat 10 times.