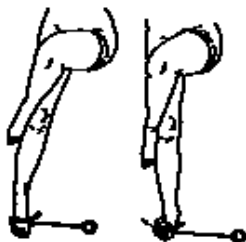




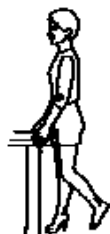
1. Position your body against a wall as shown with affected foot behind
2. Point toes directly toward wall and hold heel down
3. Lean into wall as shown so that you feel a stretch
4. Hold 20 seconds
5. 5 repetitions, 3 times per day



1. Assume the position shown, pull the affected toes toward your body so that you feel a stretch
2. Hold 20 seconds
3. Do 5 repetitions, 3 times per day



1. Tie one end of elastic tubing to a solid object and the other end to your foot as shown
2. Pull foot in the directions shown, ensure you are only moving your ankle and not your entire leg
3. Hold each repetition for 3 seconds
4. Do 30 repetitions of each exercise, 2 times per day



1. Stand on affected foot while holding on to sturdy object
2. Raise slowly onto your toes as high as you can
3. Hold 3 seconds
4. Do 30 repetitions, 2 times per day



1. Stand balanced on affected foot
2. Hold for 30 seconds and then relax
3. Do 10 repetitions, 2 times per day
4. Variations may be added by waving arms or moving raised leg around. Do this when simple balancing becomes too easy

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## ANKLE SPRAINS

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**RIVER RIDGE PHYSIOTHERAPY**  
Suite 105  
311 Commercial Street  
Milton, Ontario  
L9T 3Z9  
(905) 693-8852



**MILTON PHYSIOTHERAPY**  
Suite 201  
3006 Derry Road West  
Milton, Ontario  
L9T 5B5  
(905) 878-9293

# Ankle Sprains

## **Injury Description**

Ankle sprains are an immediately painful and incapacitating injury, which often develops into a chronic problem. If treated properly and quickly, the ankle should heal well and allow a safe and early return to normal activity. The injury is usually a result of the ankle turning in. The severity of the injury will dictate how long it will take before returning to full activity.

## **Pathology**

The first degree injury is the most common and most minor if not neglected. The ligaments connecting the bones of the ankle are stretched but not torn. There is usually very little swelling and no instability. The person is usually back to sports in a couple of weeks.

The second degree injury is more serious. The ankle ligaments are partially torn. There is some blood in the tissues and there will be some bruising of the ankle. This injury takes 3-8 weeks before return to full activity.

The third degree injury is the most severe. It is a more serious tear of the ligaments, but rarely requires surgery. It can take 8-12 weeks for the ligaments to fully heal and can result in loose ligaments and an unstable ankle.

## **Predisposing Factors**

1. Previous injury
2. Weak muscles
3. Inappropriate/worn out shoes
4. Improper warm up and stretching

# Treatment

The treatment is divided into four stages with the objective being an early, safe return to normal function. A Physiotherapist is best qualified to guide you through the following stages of recovery.

## **Stage 1** (up to 72 hours)

1. Ice the ankle during the day for 15 minutes every 1-2 hours. Always protect the skin with a towel between the ice and the skin.
2. Compression of the ankle will help to limit swelling. A tensor bandage is good but there are better over the counter supports that not only give compression, but are rigid to protect the ankle from further injury.
3. Elevate the ankle as often as possible.
4. Your doctor may prescribe pills to alleviate pain and reduce inflammation.
5. Crutches may be used if it is too painful to bear weight.

## **Stage 2** (first week)

You can walk on the ankle as soon as it is comfortable to do so. Crutches or a cane can be used as partial support when you begin to walk. Further support may be needed in the form of a brace or tape. Continue ice treatments as long as the ankle is swollen. After an injury your ankle may get stiff. It is very important to maintain the range of motion of your ankle

## **Stage 3** (2<sup>nd</sup> week or longer)

The crucial part of your treatment is the rehabilitation. Physiotherapy is the best way to improve strength, flexibility, and balance. This will get you back to your sport as quickly as possible. A home program is an important adjunct to the therapy.

## **Stage 4** (variable)

It is important that your ankle be strong before you return to activity. Too early a return may lead to re-injury and chronic problems.

When you can stand on the toes of your injured ankle for 20 seconds, and hop on your toes 10 times, you can begin to run. Initially you should only be jogging in a straight line. As you continue to get stronger you can progress to large figure eights and zig-zag running. Agility exercises such as stair stepping, skipping, running backwards and cross-stepping are excellent for fine tune strength and balance.

Your ankle should be protected during activity for at least 6 months post-injury. This can be done with either taping or an ankle brace.

## **Work tips**

- ♦ with second and third degree sprains an ankle brace should be used for heavy work for up to a year. However such work should not be attempted until you have completed stage 4 physiotherapy.
- ♦ Avoid prolonged standing and excessive walking

## **Exercises**

An ankle sprain is one of the most common injuries to re-occur. Therefore, the most important part of the treatment is a thorough strengthening and balance program to restore full stability and function and prevent re-injury.