



Ankle sprain

Ankle sprains are among the most common orthopaedic injuries. There are varying types and severities but the majority of ankle sprains involve partial tearing of the ligaments that stabilize the outside of the ankle. More severe sprains may also injure the ligaments on the inside or even above the level of the ankle joint.

The two most commonly injured ligaments are the anterior talofibular and calcaneofibular ligaments. Unlike the ACL in the knee, these ligaments have a good capacity to heal if protected appropriately. A boot or cast may be used for the first two to four weeks for more severe sprains. The use of ice four times daily for twenty minutes at a time can dramatically reduce inflammation and pain along with an ACE wrap or an appropriately prescribed antiinflammatory medicine. A lace up brace may then help transition back to sports while protecting these ligaments.

The ligaments often heal in an elongated position and can predispose one to another sprain. Physical therapy may significantly help to stabilize the ankle through a strengthening program enabling most to return to a competitive level within 6 weeks of injury.

We have assembled a series of exercises which can effectively improve mobility, strength, and stability after an ankle sprain. Please visit our website www.floridajointcare.com/PT to view our instructional videos created by our surgeons and therapists to correctly perform these exercises at home.

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Home Exercise Program

Follow along with instructional videos on our website www.floridajointcare.com/PT

1. Ankle plantar flexion exercises – perform 20 repetitions, perform twice daily
2. Ankle dorsiflexion exercises – perform 20 repetitions, perform twice daily
3. Ankle eversion exercises – perform 20 repetitions, perform twice daily
4. Ankle inversion exercises – perform 20 repetitions, perform twice daily
5. Calf stretch (gastrocnemius) – hold for 30 seconds, perform twice daily
6. Calf stretch (soleus) – hold for 30 seconds, perform twice daily
7. Toe raises – perform 20 repetitions, perform twice daily
8. Heel raises – perform 20 repetitions, perform twice daily
9. Balance on flat ground – 5 to 20 second single leg stances, for 2 minutes daily
10. Balance on pillow – 5 to 20 second single leg stances, for 2 minutes daily

* Allow early pain and swelling to subside before attempting items 7-10. May adjust number of repetitions and number of sets as tolerated.