

Care After Treatment Sprained Ankle



You have just been treated for a sprained ankle. The ankle is a joint where the ends of the bones of the legs and the bones of the feet meet. These bones are kept in place by ligaments and moved by muscles. Sprains occur when an abnormal movement of the ankle stretches or tears a ligament. Proper treatment, follow-up care and rehabilitation are necessary to return your ankle to normal strength, pre-injury activity and life-style.

Treatment

Raise your leg and put ice on your ankle as much as possible until the swelling decreases. Use ice packs for 15-20 minutes then take them off for at least 40 minutes. Do this 4-5 times a day to help limit swelling.

- **Protective Immobilization**

- Your ankle may be wrapped with cast padding and / or an ace bandage. This wrap is used to help limit the amount of swelling and to protect your ankle from further injury.
- Start at the toes and wrap the ace bandage continuously toward your knee. Make sure all areas of your foot and ankle are covered with the ace wrap to prevent any part of your foot from swelling. Use the wrap until no more swelling occurs.
- You may be given an appliance, such as Air-stirrup Ankle Brace, to help support and protect your ankle. Be sure to follow the instructions for care of the appliance.

- **Protective Waking**

- Use crutches, keeping weight off your ankle, until your ankle movement is close to normal and you can walk with comfort. Be sure to use a walking motion with the injured foot when crutch walking. Continue to use crutches until exercises are painless. (Refer to the handout **Crutch Walking**)

Rehabilitation

- **Range of Motion**

Begin range of motion exercises soon after your injury. Use pain as your guideline for how much to do. You may have some soreness while exercising, but if you have more than mild discomfort, discontinue the exercise. Always ice your ankle after exercising. Exercise 3-4 times a day.

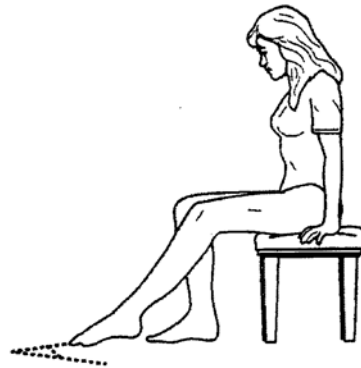
- Move your foot up and down as if pushing down or letting up on a gas pedal in a car. Repeat this exercise for 1-2 minutes.



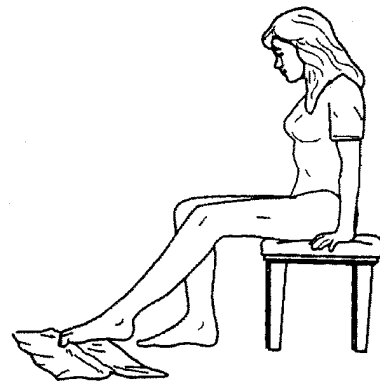
- Sit with your leg out straight. Loop a towel around the ball of your foot and pull back. Pull to the point of mild to moderate stretch, but not pain, then release the pressure. Hold the stretch 20-25 seconds and repeat this exercise 3 times a day.



- Using your ankle and foot only, trace the letters of the alphabet. Write the alphabet once each session.



- Spread a towel on the floor in front of you. Sit on a chair with your foot flat on the towel. Curl your toes and gradually gather the towel under the arch of your foot. Do not move your heel during this exercise. Increase up to ten times each session.



Follow-Up

- ▶ Call your Primary Care Doctor, Orthopedic Medicine or Sports Medicine as instructed. Call as soon as possible for an appointment to evaluate your ankle in 7-10 days. Be sure to get follow-up care to assure complete treatment and rehabilitation before returning to normal strenuous activities.

If you would like more written information, please call the Library for Health Information at (614)293-3707. You can also make the request by e-mail: health-info@osu.edu.

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