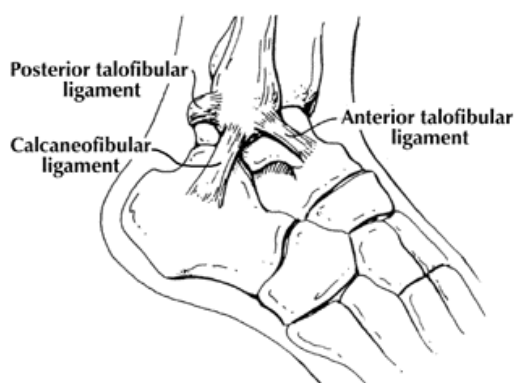


Lateral Ankle Sprains

What provides ankle stability?

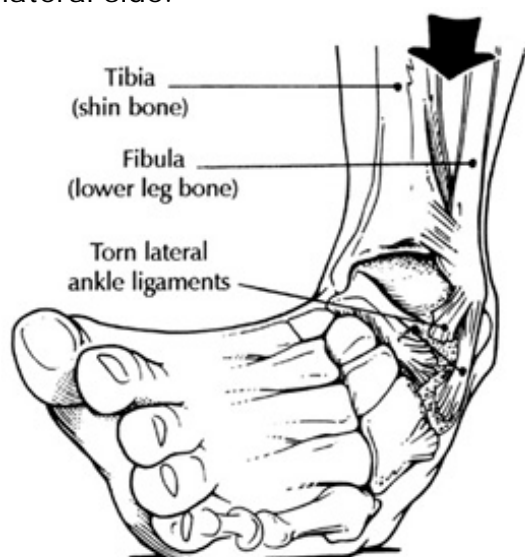
Stability of your ankle is maintained by several structures including the shape of the bones, the muscles and ligaments. On the outside (lateral side) of the ankle the two most important ligaments providing ankle stability are the anterior talofibular ligament and the calcaneofibular ligament.



What happens when I sprain my ankle?

The most common way an ankle sprain occurs is when the foot lands on an uneven surface and the foot rolls in (as seen in the picture below). The ligaments are stretched and depending on the severity they may be partially or completely torn.

Pain may be on the inside of the ankle (medial side) due to bruising of the bone and ligament as well as over the area of the damaged ligament/s and muscles on the lateral side.



How should I treat my ankle sprain?

Treatment should initially consist of **R**est, **I**ce, **C**ompression and **E**levation. Crutches or even a boot may be required to begin with. Once the pain has settled, physiotherapy is the most important treatment to allow you to return to normal function.

80-90% of people who have an ankle sprain will return to normal function with on recurrent instability after a physiotherapy rehabilitation program. Physiotherapy will include:

- Swelling management
- Range of movement exercises
- Muscle strengthening
- Balance retraining

A lace up ankle brace or ankle taping may be required to return to physical activities and sport. Sometimes if the ankle remains inflamed a referral to a sports physician for a steroid injection may be necessary to help you complete your physiotherapy.

How quickly should I recover?

The majority of patients will feel significantly better by 6 weeks. By 3 months you will be back to most activities. A complete return to competitive sport may take 4-6 months for the more severe injuries and require taping for 6-12 months.

There are a small proportion of patients who have ongoing pain, which may reflect an additional injury to other parts of the ankle and will require further investigation.

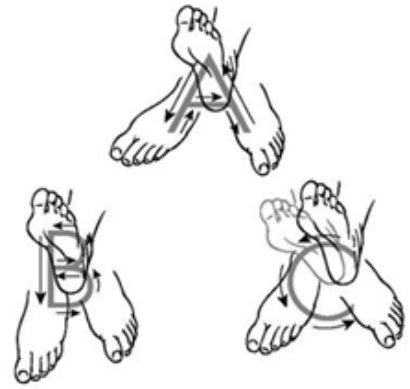
What if I keep straining my ankle?

If your ankle is unstable it may be inflamed and painful. If you have recurrent inversion sprains over a long period you may damage the cartilage of the ankle joint and may be at risk of developing spurs or arthritis.

Range of Motion Exercises

☐ Ankle Alphabet

- Moving only your ankle and foot, “write” each letter of the alphabet from A to Z.
- Keep your leg straight.
- Do not bend your knee or hip.
- The letters will start out small and get larger as your ankle motion
- Do each exercise _____ times. Repeat _____ times a day.



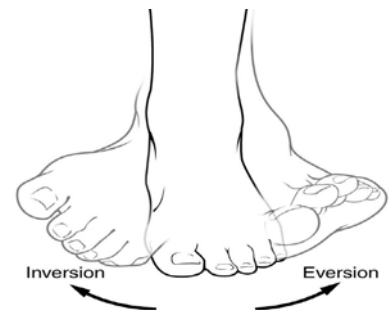
☐ Ankle Pumps

- Move your foot up and down as if pushing down or letting up on a gas pedal in a car.
- Do each exercise _____ times. Repeat _____ times a day.



☐ Ankle Inversion/Eversion

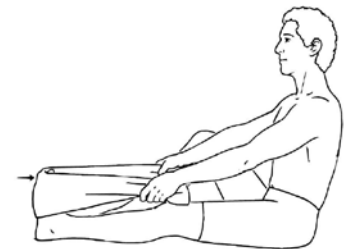
- Move your foot side to side as if mimicking a windshield wiper.
- Be sure not to move knee while performing exercise
- Do each exercise _____ times. Repeat _____ times a day.



Stretching Exercises

☐ Towel Stretch

- Sit with your leg straight in front of you.
- Place a rolled towel under the ball of your foot, holding the towel at both ends.
- Gently pull the towel toward you while keeping your knee straight.
- Hold this position for 15 to 30 seconds
- Do each exercise _____ times. Repeat _____ times a day.



☐ Calf Stretch 1

- Stand facing a wall with your hands on the wall at about eye level.
- Put the leg you want to stretch about a step behind your other leg.
- Keeping your back heel on the floor, bend your front knee until you feel a stretch in the back leg.
- Hold the stretch for 15 to 30 seconds.
- Do each exercise _____ times. Repeat _____ times a day.



☐ Calf Stretch 2

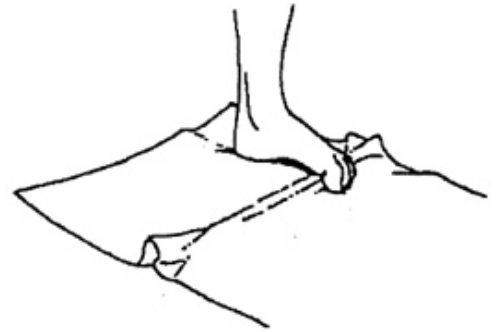
- Repeat the above exercise with the back knee bent a little, still keeping your back heel on the ground
- Do each exercise _____ times. Repeat _____ times a day.



Strengthening Exercises

□ Towel Curls

- While sitting, place a hand towel on a smooth floor
- Keeping your heel on the ground, curl your toes and grab the towel with your toes to scrunch the towel.
- Let go, and continue scrunching up the entire length of the towel.
- When you reach the end of the towel, reverse the action by grabbing the towel with your toes, scrunching it, and pushing it away from you.
- Repeat, until you have pushed the entire length of the towel away from you.
- Do each exercise _____ times. Repeat _____ times a day.



□ Towel Pickups

- While sitting, place a hand towel on a smooth floor, such as wood or tile.
- Grab the towel with your toes to scrunch the towel and pick the towel off the floor
- Do each exercise _____ times. Repeat _____ times a day.



□ Theraband Dorsiflexion

- Loop a rubber band around your foot
- Slowly push your foot against the resistance holding for 2 seconds, then return back to the starting position
- Do each exercise _____ times. Repeat _____ times a day.



Dorsiflexion

□ Theraband Plantarflexion

- Loop a rubber band around your foot
- Slowly push your foot against the resistance holding for 2 seconds, then return back to the starting position
- Do each exercise _____ times. Repeat _____ times a day.



Plantar flexion

□ Theraband Inversion

- Loop a rubber band around your foot
- Slowly push your foot inwards against the resistance holding for 2 seconds, then return back to the starting position
- Do each exercise _____ times. Repeat _____ times a day.



❑ Theraband Eversion

- Loop a rubber band around your foot
- Slowly push your foot outwards against the resistance holding for 2 seconds, then return back to the starting position
- Do each exercise _____ times. Repeat _____ times a day.



❑ Calf/Heel Raises

- Slowly raise your heels off the ground as far as they can lift
- Hold for 2 seconds and then slowly lower back down to the floor
- Do each exercise _____ times. Repeat _____ times a day.



Heel raises

❑ Toe Raises

- Slowly raise your toes off the ground as far as they can lift
- Hold for 2 seconds and then slowly lower back down to the floor
- Do each exercise _____ times. Repeat _____ times a day.



Toe raises

Balance Exercises



Single leg balance

1. Stand on just your injured foot with arms across your chest. If you feel unsteady, stand in a doorway so you can put your hands on the doorframe to help you. Balance for a long as you can, working up to 60 seconds. When you can do this for 60 seconds, try exercise number 2.

2. Stand on your injured foot only, hold your arms across your chest, and close your eyes. If you feel unsteady, stand in a doorway so you can put your hands on the doorframe to help you. When you can do this for 60 seconds, try exercise number 3.

3. Stand on your injured foot only on an uneven surface like a pillow, hold your arms across your chest, and keep your eyes open. If you feel unsteady, stand in a doorway so you can put your hands on the doorframe to help you. Balance for a long as you can, working up to 60 seconds. When you can do this for 60 seconds, try exercise number 4.

4. Stand on your injured foot only on an uneven surface like a pillow, hold your arms across your chest, and close your eyes. If you feel unsteady, stand in a doorway so you can put your hands on the doorframe to help you. Balance for a long as you can, working up to 60 seconds.