



Ankle Sprain

There are two main sets of ligaments around the ankle. One or more of the ligaments may be stretched or torn when the ankle is forced beyond its normal range. When the ankle is forced inward it results in an inversion sprain damaging the outside (lateral) ligaments. When forced outward an eversion sprain to the inside (medial) ligaments results. The inversion sprain is the most common. Tenderness will be felt over the injured area of the ligaments and associated structures. Bruising and swelling will initially be in the immediate area but may spread to the entire foot.

Treatment initially focuses on decreasing the pain and inflammation using modalities such as ice and ultrasound. As healing progresses range of motion exercises, stability and strengthening will be incorporated. Recovery time will depend on the severity of the injury, as well as how the body reacts both to the injury and the treatment.

The therapeutic modalities commonly used include:

Ultrasound: uses sound waves and may be used to decrease scar tissue, increase blood flow, or decrease pain.

Interferential Current: uses electrical current to decrease pain, can also be used to elicit muscle contraction and decrease swelling.

Acupuncture: uses small, solid needles to encourage healing, reduce pain, and improve function of affected areas of the body.

What can you do at home?

Rest: by decreasing your activity you allow your body a chance to heal itself. When you start to feel better it is important to ease back into activities which might be aggravating. Listen to your body - pain means that you have done too much.

Ice: ice decreases the metabolism of your cells so that they do not die despite a decrease in oxygen to the injured area. Ice should be kept on for approximately 15 minutes, several times a day. The injured area should be elevated (above the level of your heart) at the same time. Use a wet towel between the ice and your skin to protect against frostbite. You can use frozen veggies, cold packs, or real ice.