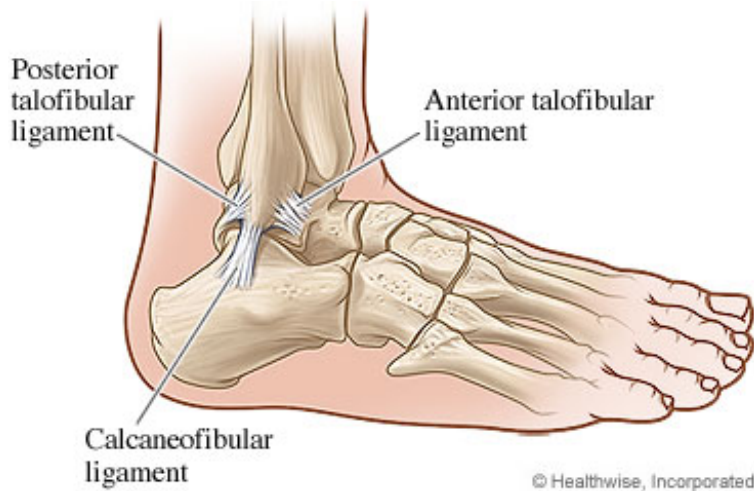


Ankle Sprain: Care Instructions



Your Care Instructions

An ankle sprain can happen when you twist your ankle. The ligaments that support the ankle can get stretched and torn. Often the ankle is swollen and painful.

Ankle sprains may take from several weeks to several months to heal. Usually, the more pain and swelling you have, the more severe your ankle sprain is and the longer it will take to heal. You can heal faster and regain strength in your ankle with good home treatment.

It is very important to give your ankle time to heal completely, so that you do not easily hurt your ankle again.

Follow-up care is a key part of your treatment and safety. Be sure to make and go to all appointments, and call your doctor if you are having problems. It's also a good idea to know your test results and keep a list of the medicines you take.

How can you care for yourself at home?

- Prop up your foot on pillows as much as possible for the next 3 days. Try to keep your ankle above the level of your heart. This will help reduce the swelling.
- Follow your doctor's directions for wearing a splint or elastic bandage. Wrapping the ankle may help reduce or prevent swelling.
- Your doctor may give you a splint, a brace, an air stirrup, or another form of ankle support to protect your ankle until it is healed. Wear it as directed while your ankle is healing. Do not remove it unless your doctor tells you to. After your ankle has healed, ask your doctor whether you should wear the brace when you exercise.
- Put ice or cold packs on your injured ankle for 10 to 20 minutes at a time. Try to do this every 1 to 2 hours for the next 3 days (when you are awake) or until the swelling goes down. Put a thin cloth between the ice and your skin.
- You may need to use crutches until you can walk without pain. If you do use crutches, try to bear some weight on your injured ankle if you can do so without pain. This helps the ankle heal.
- Take pain medicines exactly as directed.
 - If the doctor gave you a prescription medicine for pain, take it as prescribed.
 - If you are not taking a prescription pain medicine, ask your doctor if you can take an over-the-counter medicine.
- If you have been given ankle exercises to do at home, do them exactly as instructed. These can promote healing and help prevent lasting weakness.

When should you call for help?

Call your doctor now or seek immediate medical care if:

- Your pain is getting worse.
- Your swelling is getting worse.
- Your splint feels too tight or you are unable to loosen it.

Watch closely for changes in your health, and be sure to contact your doctor if:

- You are not getting better after 1 week.

Care instructions adapted under license by Footdrx, Llp. This care instruction is for use with your licensed healthcare professional. If you have questions about a medical condition or this instruction, always ask your healthcare professional. Healthwise, Incorporated disclaims any warranty or liability for your use of this information.