

Ankle Sprain

Ankle sprains are caused by an unnatural twisting or force on the ankle bones of the foot, often resulting in one or more ligaments on the outside of the ankle to be stretched or torn. An ankle sprain refers to tearing of the ligaments of the ankle. The most common ankle sprain occurs on the lateral or outside part of the ankle. This is an extremely common injury which affects many people during a wide variety of activities. If not properly treated, ankle sprains could develop into long-term problems.

Treatment includes resting the ankle and applying ice to reduce swelling. Compressive bandages also may be used to immobilize and support the injury and range of motion exercises. Surgery is not required in the vast majority of ankle sprains. Even in severe sprains, these ligaments will heal without surgery. To prevent ankle sprains, try to maintain strength, balance, and flexibility in the foot and ankle through exercising, stretching, and wearing well-fitted shoes.

Chronic Lateral Ankle Pain

Chronic lateral ankle pain is recurring or chronic pain on the outside part of the ankle that often develops after an injury such as a sprained ankle. Other conditions, however, may also cause chronic ankle pain.

Signs and symptoms include:

- Ankle instability
- Difficulty walking on uneven ground or in high heels.
- Pain, sometimes intense, on the outer side of the ankle.
- Repeated ankle sprains
- Stiffness
- Swelling
- Tenderness



While ankle sprains are the most common cause of chronic lateral ankle pain, other causes may include:

- A fracture in one of the bones that make up the ankle joint.
- Arthritis of the ankle joint
- Inflammation of the joint lining
- Injury to the nerves that pass through the ankle. In this case, the nerves become stretched, torn, injured by a direct blow, or pinched under pressure.
- Scar tissue in the ankle after a sprain. The scar tissue takes up space in the joint, putting pressure on the ligaments.

- Torn or inflamed tendon

Treatments for chronic lateral ankle pain include:

- Over the counter or prescription anti-inflammatory medications to reduce swelling. Consult your physician before taking any medications.
- Physical therapy, including tilt-board exercises, directed at strengthening the muscles, restoring range of motion, and increasing your perception of joint position.