

Common Athletic Injuries of the Ankle



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Common Injuries of the Ankle in Athletes

- Ankle Sprains
- Chronic Lateral Ankle Instability
- Peroneal Tendon Injuries
- Achilles Tendon Tears



Ankle Sprains

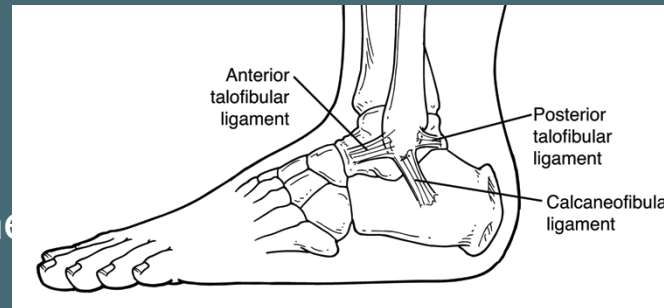


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What's an Ankle Sprain?

- An injury to one or more ligaments in the ankle
- Ligaments
 - Connect two bones and hold a joint together
 - 3 lateral ligaments in the ankle give you stability
 - Medial ligaments also help stabilize the ankle
- In an ankle sprain, ligament(s) are either stretched or torn



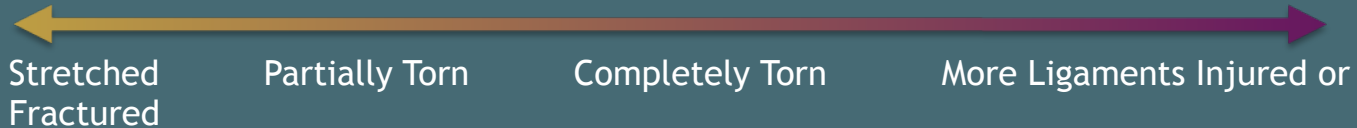
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Some Sprains Are Worse Than Others

Less Severe

More Severe



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Symptoms of a Sprained Ankle

- Pain or soreness
- Swelling
- Bruising
- Difficulty walking
- Stiffness in the joint



What Should You Do?

- Seek prompt medical attention
 - Follow-up with a specialist—a foot and ankle surgeon
 - Ice, elevate and rest!



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Treatment for Ankle Sprains

- Splinting or casting
- Rest, ice, compression
- Medication
- Physical therapy
- More severe cases may require surgery to repair the ligament(s).



Chronic Lateral Ankle Instability



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What's Chronic Ankle Instability?

- A “giving way” of the outer side of the ankle
- This “giving way” can lead to an ankle sprain
- Often caused by having previous sprains



Proper Rehabilitation Can Help Prevent This Condition . . . and Future Sprains

- Proper rehabilitation (physical therapy):
 - Strengthens foot and ankle muscles
 - “Retrains” the ankle for better balance



Signs and Symptoms of Chronic Ankle Instability

- Ankle feels wobbly
- A repeated turning of the ankle
- Chronic swelling and discomfort
- Pain or tenderness



Treatment for Chronic Ankle Instability

- Non-surgical treatment
 - Physical therapy
 - Bracing
 - Medications
- Surgery
 - Repair or reconstruction of damaged ligament(s)



Peroneal Tendon Injuries

- Acute (sudden) tears
- Subluxation



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The Peroneal Tendons

- Two tendons behind the outer ankle bone
- Stabilize the foot
- Protect against sprains



The Symptoms of a Peroneal Tendon Tear

- Pain
- Swelling
- Weakness of the foot and ankle
- With time, the foot shape may change



Subluxation of the Peroneal Tendon(s)

- One or both tendons slip out of position
- Can occur after trauma, such as a sprained ankle
- Early treatment is a must!



Symptoms of a Peroneal Tendon Subluxation

- A snapping feeling of the tendon around the ankle bone
- Sporadic pain behind the outside ankle bone
- Ankle instability or weakness!



Treatment for Peroneal Tendon Injuries

- Splinting or casting
- Oral or injected medications
- Physical therapy
- Bracing
- In some cases, surgery is necessary



Achilles Tendon Tears

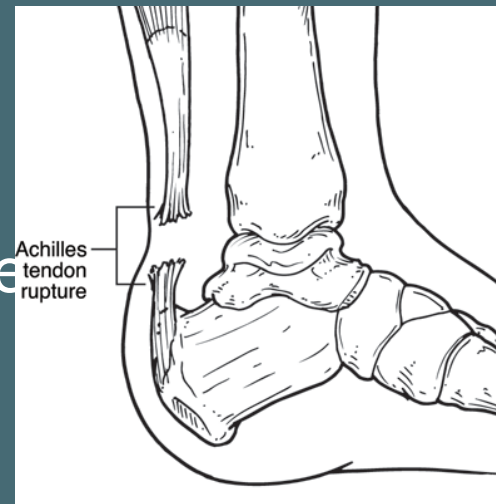


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The Achilles Tendon: The “Heel Cord”

- Runs down the back of the low leg
- Connects the calf muscle to the heel bone
- Helps to raise the heel off the ground



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What Causes an Achilles Tendon Tear?

- Can be a complete tear or partial tear
- Occurs when the tendon is stretched too much
- Can occur with jumping, pivoting, sudden accelerations in running
- Common among “weekend warriors”



Symptoms of an Achilles Tendon Tear

- Sudden pain
- Pain may then subside to a dull ache
- Popping or snapping sensation
- Swelling
- Difficult to walk (especially upstairs or uphill)
and difficult to rise on toes



Treatment Options for an Achilles Tendon Tear

- Non-surgical treatment
 - Higher likelihood of re-tearing the tendon
 - Wearing a cast, walking boot, or brace
- Surgery
 - Lower likelihood of re-tearing the tendon
 - May increase push-off strength
 - May improve muscle function and ankle movement



For Ankle Injuries, Seek Prompt Medical Attention

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