

Ankle injuries—Can Physio help?

If you “roll your ankle” as your foot hits the ground the result may be a **sprained ankle** as your ankle ligaments are overstretched.

Physios can assess your ankle to determine the severity & type of injury; provide treatment which promotes healing & recovery.

They can offer strategies & exercise to prevent sprains and improve performance.



THE SPORTS MEDICINE CENTRE

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current topics >>>

**The Sports Medicine Centre
For all your Physio Needs...**

Tim has attended a Dynamic Taping Course at the AIS last week, learning all the latest techniques and evidence for taping.

Make an appointment today with Tim to quiz him on Dynamic Tape.

TSMC would like to introduce our latest team member Felicity Middleton.

Fliss re-joins us at TSMC after a 5 year stint working in the United Kingdom with International Rugby.

Fliss will be working at our Turner clinic on Tuesdays and Fridays for the next 3 months.

Call 6247 7033 to make an appointment with Fliss today.

**For more information go to
www.sportsmedicinecentre.com.au**



Ankle Injuries...

Single most common sporting Injury across all sports!

Sports requiring jumping, turning and twisting movements such as basketball, volleyball, netball and football; and explosive changes of direction such as soccer, tennis and hockey are particularly vulnerable to ankle sprains.

Ankle sprains can just as easily happen when you walk on uneven pavement, or if your heel gets caught in a hole. Ankle sprains are not just a sportspersons nightmare - they can vary in severity from a mild sprain to more severe complete ligament rupture.

Following an ankle sprain, the ankle joint may become unstable and take a long time to recover

The ankle joint is made up of four bones shaped to make the joint stable. Increased stability of the joint is provided by ligaments, which are bands of strong, fibrous tissue that guide movement and prevent the joint from moving too much.

An ankle sprain occurs when the ligaments are over stretched causing ligament fibres and small blood vessels to tear. Pain, bleeding in the tissues and swelling are the result

Quite often we may see an ankle injury as minor and thus not seek any advice on how to best manage it. However, if there is any swelling or bruising in the ankle, or if it hurts to walk on following injury, you should have it assessed by a Physiotherapist to ensure a quick recovery with a reduced risk of re-injury.

When you have damaged the ankle sufficiently to cause swelling, bruising or pain, it is likely that you have caused significant injury to the soft tissue structures that support the ankle, as well as the proprioceptors within the ankle joint that help us know where our ankle is in space and therefore help us to stay balanced.

Extensive studies have shown that whilst the ankle may feel like it heals on its own, if you don't strengthen the muscles in and around the ankle, restore normal joint movement and retrain the proprioceptors, it is very likely that re-injury will occur in the ankle.

Ankle sprains are commonly caused by the inversion of the foot and ankle i.e. the foot and ankle turn in. This, accompanied with our body weight, places a great stress on the structures on the outside (lateral side) of the foot and ankle.

The joint is stabilised by three ligaments laterally:

- anterior talofibular ATFL(front),
- calcaneofibular (side)
- posterior talofibular (back).

Sprains to any of these ligaments (inversion sprains, foot twists inward) account for more than 80% of all ankle sprains.

Most commonly the ATFL is injured – more than 90% of inversion sprains. The ATFL is part of the capsule surrounding the ankle joint; when injured there is usually immediate swelling.

Understanding Ankle Sprains...

Acute ankle sprains result from a force being applied to the ankle joint which causes excessive range of movement at the joint.

You may hear an audible 'snap' or 'pop', due to the tearing or stretching of the ligaments.

Sprains are graded on a scale of 1 to 3 depending on the degree of tearing to the ligaments.

In most cases, x-rays are performed to rule out a fracture or dislocation following "Ottawa Ankle Rules" (These are a series of signs and symptoms that are used to help rule out a fracture).

Research suggests only 15% of ankle injuries result in a fracture.

A Physio should be seen as soon as possible after the injury to determine the extent of injury and to advise on treatment and rehabilitation. Grading of injuries help to establish an appropriate prognosis and the rate which rehabilitation can be progressed.



If the force is more severe, the CCF ligament is also damaged. The PTF ligament is less likely to be damaged. A complete tear of all ligaments may result in a dislocation of the ankle joint and an accompanying fracture. A rare and severe injury.

On the inside of the ankle (medial side), the joint is stabilised by a thick, strong fibrous ligament called the deltoid ligament. Sprains to the deltoid ligament (eversion sprains) account for less than 20% of all ankle sprains. At **The Sports Medicine Centre** we treat patients with ankle injuries daily and get great results. Our Physios are highly trained in the assessment of ankle injuries and we know, as with any musculoskeletal injury, a correct diagnosis is essential for effective management.

Based on our findings and your goals, we develop an individualised treatment plan for you focused on restoration of normal range of movement, strength and decreasing the risk of recurrent injury of your ankle or injury to other areas of the body. We are able to refer for X-rays and MRI's for further information when necessary and liaise with Foot and Ankle Specialists regularly to ensure the most thorough of management plans, which achieve the best outcomes.

As well as "hands on" physio; Treatment for ankle pain may include but is not limited to:

- Exercise based therapy - strength, flexibility & balance.
- Hydrotherapy
- Dry needling
- Biomechanical analysis
- Sports specific training
- taping or bracing



Immediate Management.

Don't forget **RICED**

REST

ICE

COMPRESSION

ELEVATION

DIAGNOSIS

To prevent increased swelling and help your recovery, during the first 48 hours after injury avoid any of the **H.A.R.M.** factors: **heat, alcohol, running, massage.**

Grade 1...

- Minor tear
- Minimal pain
- Little to no joint instability
- Mild pain with weight bearing
- Slight loss of balance

Grade 2 ...

- Some tearing of the ligament fibres
- Moderate to severe pain
- Moderate instability of the joint
- Swelling and stiffness
- Pain with weight bearing activities
- Poor balance

Grade 3...

- Complete tear of the ligament
- Severe followed by minimal pain
- Gross instability of the joint
- Severe swelling
- Possible pain with weight bearing
- Poor balance

A Remember, the sooner you get your ankle assessed, the better results you are likely to experience.

Our Physios are very experienced in acute injury management. Treating an injury sooner means that we can limit the amount of secondary damage that occurs and therefore speed up your recovery process and get you back to doing what you enjoy faster.

ask the experts >>>

Q: Can Physio Help?

A: The Importance of Good Rehabilitation can't be underestimated !!!



The biggest risk of an ankle injury is previous ankle injury - or a poorly rehabilitated ankle sprain. There is no direct link between severity of injury and degree of instability, a minor sprain may result in functional instability. **Thus the importance of good Rehabilitation cannot be underestimated.**

Don't run the risk of re-injury. Let us help get you back on the park safely and with confidence. Call **TSMC at Turner 6247 7033 or Tuggeranong 6293 3413** for an appointment with one of our experienced Physiotherapists today ...

www.sportsmedicinecentre.com.au

