

WHAT OUR PHYSIOS DO

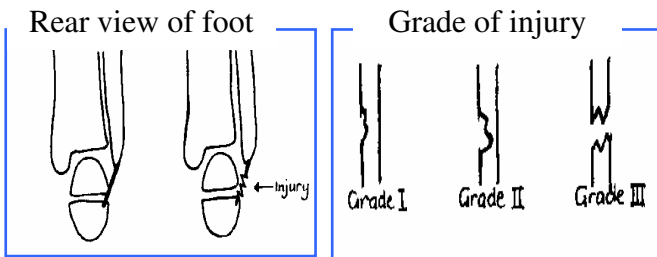
WHAT OUR PHYSIOS DO *at*

**MENAI DISTRICT PHYSIOTHERAPY
& SPORTS INJURY CENTRE**

ANKLE SPRAINS

Introduction

Ankle sprains account for 21% of all athletic injuries. It is common to sprain your ankle without playing sport - walking on unlevel ground may cause the injury.



How does it happen?

Sprains occur when the foot twists or rolls inwards, usually at the point when the foot hits the ground. The common result is damage to the lateral or outside ligament of the ankle. Ligament damage can be minor (Grade I), significantly damaged (Grade II) or completely ruptured (Grade III). On some occasions the joint surface or muscle tendons may also be damaged.

Strapping / Bracing

Supports and protects ankle ligaments during early return to weight bearing activities.

Massage/Stretching

Specific stretching and massage to key areas will remove swelling and help restore normal movement to prevent ongoing stiffness.

Joint Mobilisation

Trauma to bone, ligaments and joint capsule as a result of a sprain may cause scarring and ankle stiffening. Physiotherapists use special mobilisation techniques to restore foot flexibility to reduce pain during movement and weight bearing.

Strength and Balance re-training

Co-ordinated muscle control is lost following an ankle sprain, effecting stability on uneven ground. Exercises to regain normal ankle function will prevent longterm instability and assist safe return to activity. These need to be done for all sprains regardless of severity for up to 8 weeks following the injury (even if movement is full and pain free).

PHYSIOTHERAPY AIM

Early movement and walking in pain free limits to reduce swelling prevent stiffness and promote healing.

Treatment

Because of their good blood supply, a lateral ligament ankle sprain will result in a significant amount of swelling. Swelling will lead to pain, reduced movement and difficulty walking. Treatment techniques that may prove helpful in managing swelling and early return to activities include:

Cryokinetics (Ice with movement)

Immersing the foot and ankle in an esky or bucket and slowly adding ice is more effective than ice packs in controlling pain and swelling. As your foot goes numb, remove it from the water and stand to commence gentle painfree bending. Early controlled weight bearing will reduce stiffness and help "pump-out" any swelling within the ankle joint, assisting return to walking.

Compression

Applying a piece of stockinette, supplied by the physiotherapist, will reduce swelling and assist support during walking.

Return to sport

Your physiotherapist will advise on the most effective way of supporting your ankle on return to sport.

Ongoing problems

Further investigative tests (eg Bone scans, MRI) may be required if pain is persisting beyond expected time frames. Your Physiotherapist will refer you back to your GP for orthopaedic examination.

Remember; Fast effective treatment during the initial 78 hours will assist "damage control" and assist in a speedy recovery.

MOVE WELL PLAY WELL
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Written by Cameron Watson