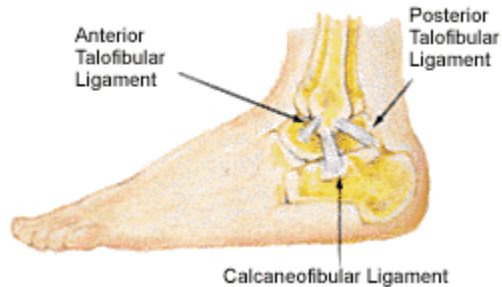


## Ankle Sprains and Treatments

Ankle sprains are common injuries that occur when ligaments are stretched or torn. The ankle sprain is the most common athletic injury. Nearly 85% of ankle sprains occur laterally, or on the outside of ankle joints. Sprains on the inside ligaments are less common. Many sprains occur when participating in sports, or by twisting the ankle when walking on an uneven surface. Some individuals, due to their bone structure or foot type, are more prone to ankle sprains.

**Anatomy of the Ankle Joint** The ankle joint is made up of three bones. The bones are called the tibia, fibula, and talus. These bones form a socket in which the ankle joint moves



The tibia, fibula and talus are connected to each other by ligaments. Think of ligaments as thick rubber bands that hold bones together so that joints are stable and function properly. When an ankle is sprained, a ligament is either stretched, partially torn or completely torn.

**Treatments** Initial treatment includes rest, ice, compression and elevation (RICE). The "RICE" method promotes healing, decreases pain, and reduces swelling around the ankle joint. In more severe cases, nonweightbearing activities are encouraged and crutches may be recommended. Compression may be achieved with an elastic bandage, splint, short leg cast or brace, depending on severity. Compression eliminates motion around the ankle joint. The ability to walk or participate in other weightbearing activities during the healing process depends on the severity or type of ankle sprain. This is determined by the podiatric surgeon once the diagnosis is made. Most ankle sprains heal in three to eight weeks. In more severe cases, ligaments may require more healing time to promote ankle stability. Repeated ankle sprains may cause chronic instability, interfering with walking or sports activities. In this case, the podiatric surgeon may recommend a surgical procedure to tighten or create new ligaments around the ankle joint to re-establish stability of the ankle joint.

Conservative treatment of many foot and ankle problems often promotes pain relief. For example, ankle strengthening exercises following the injury help prevent recurrence of injury. Most of these exercises can be done at home after appropriate instruction. Ankle supports and braces or taping around the ankle joint is especially helpful for individuals participating in sports. Your podiatric surgeon may recommend preventive bracing to help prevent future injury.

## Contrast Bathing Instructions

**Prepare 2 basins of water. The first basin will be cold water and the second warm water. Soak your foot/feet in the cold water for 3 minutes then soak your foot/feet in warm water for 1 minute. REPEAT processes three times. May do once or twice daily**