



## Ankle Sprains

Ankle sprains are an unfortunately common occurrence during sporting activities as well as a result of everyday activities. The term sprain refers to stretching or tearing of the ligaments, a structure connecting bone to bone. In the ankle, these ligaments are thickened areas in the joint lining. Many ankle sprains resolve without continued pain or other symptoms, however, too often a sprain is associated with additional injury that causes continued symptoms. A sprain can also fail to heal, or heal with the ligaments longer which leads to chronic instability.

The primary concern with an ankle sprain from the orthopedic standpoint is injury to the joint surface (the cartilage). This can occur with a single sprain, or more commonly with recurring injuries. Injury to the cartilage can lead to development of ankle arthritis.

### Here are some things to consider:

- While many patients do well after ankle sprains, clinical evaluation is important to exclude other often associated injuries that can cause persistent symptoms.
- If you are unable to place weight through your foot for more than a few minutes after your injury, you should be evaluated in the office.
- If you have had recurrent ankle sprains there are other considerations as to why this may be occurring.
- With appropriate management, most sprains will heal fairly quickly and allow full return to sporting activities.
- “High Ankle Sprains” involve injury to the ligaments holding the two bones of the leg (tibia and fibula) together. Injury to these ligaments has been reported to occur in ~20% of ankle sprains. Smaller injuries to these ligaments typically heal without difficulty. However, these injuries need evaluation as long-term consequences can occur if these more significant injuries are not treated.



Swelling and bruising

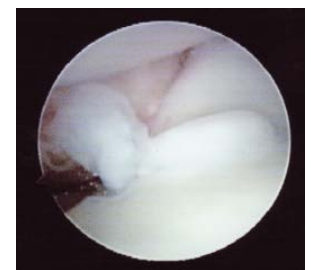
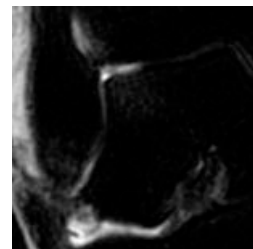


Underlying deformity likely to suffer from additional sprains/injuries

### Surgical Intervention:

Fortunately, the need for surgical intervention for an ankle sprain is quite uncommon. Surgical intervention is usually indicated for the other associated injuries that can occur at the time of an ankle sprain, and may be able to be performed arthroscopically. Occasionally, with persistent instability reconstruction of the ankle ligaments is required to restore stability and function of the ankle.

MRI shows cartilage injury



At time of surgery cartilage flap is seen and addressed arthroscopically