



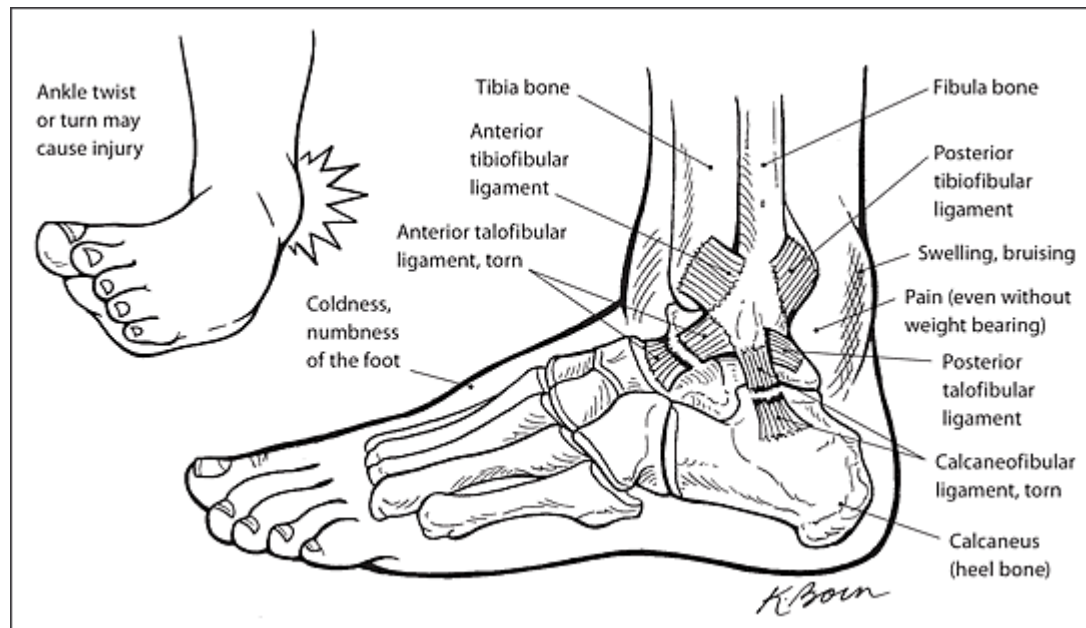
January
2007

Client handout courtesy of Certified Professional Trainers Network, CPTN e-News

Ankle Sprains: What You Should Know¹

What is an ankle sprain?

Ligaments connect bones in your ankle. If you turn or twist your ankle in an unusual way, the ligaments can stretch or tear. This is called an ankle sprain (see drawing).



How can I tell if I have an ankle sprain?

If your ankle is sprained, it may hurt even when you aren't standing on it. Your ankle may be swollen or bruised and you may not be able to move it very well. You should go to the doctor a) if your ankle hurts badly, b) if you can't walk or stand on your ankle, or c) if your foot is cold or numb. If you think you have an ankle injury and have diabetes or another serious illness, you also should see your doctor, even if you aren't sure how badly it's hurt.

How is an ankle sprain treated?

Ibuprofen (one brand: Motrin) or naproxen (one brand: Aleve) can help with the pain. Putting ice on your ankle and wrapping it with a bandage can help keep your ankle from swelling and bruising. Keeping your ankle raised while sitting can also help. You should not walk on the foot where the ankle is swollen until your doctor says it's okay. Two or three days after your injury, you should gradually start exercising your ankle several times a day to make it stronger. Ask your doctor when it's okay for you to exercise.

How can I prevent an ankle sprain?

Wear shoes that are correct for the activity you are performing. For example, running shoes are designed specifically for running, whereas walking shoes are designed primarily for walking. There are different requirements for each activity and, often, a "cross-trainer" is a poor compromise for the correct performance requirements of individual shoes. Warm up well before activity and stretch well afterwards. If you have had a sprain before, ask your doctor if wearing a support will help your ankle when you are very active. Talk to your doctor about how to prevent an ankle injury while playing sports.

Where can I get more information?

From a recognized health professional who deals with sports injuries.

(1. Adapted from a patient information handout: *American Family Physician*, Nov. 15, 2006, 74(10), p. 1725).

PLACE YOUR NAME AND CONTACT INFO HERE