

## What is it?

An ankle sprain is an ankle injury caused by rolling, twisting or straining the ankle.

An ankle sprain causes swelling, pain and bruising. In many cases, you can treat your ankle sprain at home with rest, ice, a compression bandage and elevation (RICE). You may also need pain relief.

There are grades of ankle sprains, ranging from:

- **Grade 1** – a mild sprain with little to no ligament tearing
- **Grade 2** – a partial ligament tear with some pain and bruising
- **Grade 3** – a complete rupture of one or more ligaments; you may not be able to walk or bear weight

Your treatment and how you recover will depend on the grade of your ankle sprain and any other health issues. If your ankle sprain is severe, you may need an X-ray to make sure it isn't an ankle fracture. Children and older people are more likely to have fractures.

## What will my GP do now?

Your GP may check your sprain and talk to you about rest, ice, compression and elevation (RICE). They may give you pain relief.

If you have a grade 2 or 3 sprain, your GP may suggest you see a physiotherapist.

Your GP may also talk to you about where to buy a boot or ankle tape. These products can help support your sprained ankle while it heals.

## What will my GP do in the future?

Your GP may check on your ankle sprain again in the next two months after your first visit. If you still have pain and swelling, your GP may suggest you have some tests. Your GP may discuss how to ease back into sports and tape your ankle for support to prevent further sprains. Your GP can refer you to a physiotherapist if you need more support.

## What questions could I ask my doctor?

- How long will my ankle take to heal?*
- What pain relief medication can I take?*
- What activities should I avoid?*



## What can I do?

Follow your GP's advice about treatment and RICE. Support your ankle and keep it taped. Ask your GP about:

- Strength exercises
- When you can return to sports
- If you need to avoid anything

Keep an eye on your symptoms. See your GP if the pain or swelling are not getting better.

## What supports are available?

If your ankle sprain is not getting better, your GP can refer you to a physiotherapist or private specialist. Ask your GP about the options.

## Where can I learn more?

- **NSW Agency for Clinical Innovation** – Ankle Sprain: [aci.health.nsw.gov.au](http://aci.health.nsw.gov.au)
- **RACGP** – 8-Week Training Program for Preventing Recurrent Ankle Sprain: [racgp.org.au](http://racgp.org.au)