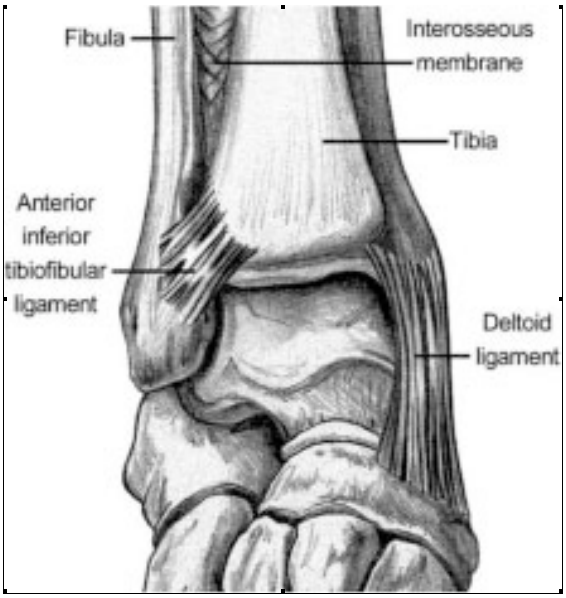
# Ankle Sprain

## The problem

- Ankle sprains generally occur from an injury where ligaments which support the ankle are damaged/torn
- This leads to swelling, pain and restriction of movement
- Once the ligament has been damaged, it is necessary to **1)** allow time to heal, and **2)** rehabilitate correctly to ensure return to normal function
- Ligaments can take up to 12 weeks to heal, due to poor blood supply
- The ligaments of the ankle are grouped into two categories: the Lateral Collateral Ligaments and the Medial Collateral Ligaments

## Interesting facts

- Injury to the lateral or outside ligaments of the ankle is more common than to the medial ligaments, as these are not as well supported by the bony structures of the ankle
- Damaging ligaments will affect your ability to balance
- Swelling can often persist in the ankle due to gravity
- Many sports, including Netball, require athletes to tape their ankles before playing a game to help prevent the extremely high rate of injury




## What you can expect/look out for

- Pain
- Swelling
- Bruising
- Difficulty walking
- Restriction of range of movement

## Hints for self management

- Initial management should follow the RICER principles
  **R**: Rest
  **I:** Ice wrapped in towel (20mins every 2 hours for the first 48 hours post injury)
  **C:** Compression
  **E:** Elevation
  **R:** Review with a health professional
- If there is excessive pain or pain that persists for more than a few days, this may indicate a more serious injury such as a fracture or a high ankle sprain; both which require medical attention immediately

## Management options

- An x-ray can be taken to rule out a fracture
- Conservative treatment such as support and strengthening exercises will be very effective in most ankle sprains
- If a fracture or high ankle sprain is present, immobilisation +/- surgery may be required to allow healing

## More information

- Current evidence suggests that a combination of paracetamol and an NSAID (anti-inflammatory) may offer superior pain relief compared with either drug alone
- Recent evidence suggests that controlled movement, together with ice and mobilization by your skilled physiotherapist can result in an earlier return to normal movement and function
- Bracing or taping has been shown to assist in the prevention of recurrent ankle sprains. Neither bracing nor taping seems to be the better option, despite personal preferences for one or the other
- http://orthopedics.about.com/cs/sprainsstrains/a/anklesprain.htm for more information

**Contact the team at Sydney Sports & Orthopaedic Physiotherapy to speak directly to a specialised physiotherapist**

**P. 9252 5770 or E. reception@ssop.com.au**