

Toe Sprain

Sprained toes are a lot more minor than that of a broken toe and they are far more common. Sprains are often the result of jamming your toe into an object. It can occur from landing in an awkward position, stopping all of a sudden, stubbing the toe into something when you are walking around or having the toe collide with the front part of the shoe. If you participate in vigorous sporting activities like basketball, soccer or dancing, there is a good chance of spraining your toe, especially when it is a new sport. Hiking, climbing or other outdoor pursuits over rougher terrain can contribute to spraining your toe.

Toe Sprain Anatomy

The feet are composed of flexible structures of joints, bones, soft tissues and muscles that help you to stand upright and perform activities like running, walking and jumping. Muscles, ligaments and tendons run along the surface of the foot, which allow complex movements that are needed for balance and motion. The Achilles tendon keeps the calf muscle and the heel connected. It is necessary for you to stand on your toes, jump or run.

How to Treat a Toe Sprain:

1. Rest

If the toe is injured, you want to avoid movement and exercise that causes pain in the toe, such as walking or standing. Circumstances might require you to move your daily activities around. Minimizing movement and using crutches will help to alleviate unnecessary pressure on the toe sprain, which promotes a faster recovery.

2. Ice

Apply ice to the area for 5-10 minutes at a time three to five times per day to reduce swelling and slow down the inflammation near the injury site. Soothing the inflammation will help to reduce a certain amount of the pain and speed the recovery process up. Make sure to wrap the ice in a thin towel to prevent an ice burn from occurring.

3. Elevation

Elevating the toe is one of the best methods for reducing swelling in the site. Reducing blood flow to your toe is going to help minimize swelling and decrease pain in the foot. Elevating the injured site will help provide your body with the time it needs to rest and eliminate any extra pressure on the injury.

4. Anti-inflammatory Rubs/Gels

Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory rubs or gels can help reduce inflammation. Use under guidance of your doctor.

5. Protective Shoes

Protective shoes that will limit the movement of the toe and prevent any stubbing will help minimize the risk of further aggravating the toe injury and causing the pain to increase.

Tips:

- Placing too much pressure on one part of your toe ends up pushing it from its normal position, so you want to make sure your weight is balanced properly.
- Limit any unnecessary starting or stopping movements following a toe sprain.
- Evenly distributing your weight across the foot can help to prevent sprains.
- Walking barefoot on uneven terrain may often cause a toe sprain if you are not used to it.