

## **Ankle Sprains Explained: What they are and what to do About Them**

Chances are you've sprained your ankle at least once in your life. If you look at it, you will notice two knobs, one on either side, which are called the medial and lateral malleoli. While they look similar, the inner bone is shorter. Because of this quirk of nature, as the foot rolls inward, the ligaments on the opposite side become the primary stabilizers. When you turn your ankle, the ligaments stretch or tear. Rarely, the injury is more serious. Numbing, tingling, or the inability to bear weight mean you require medical attention.

The first 30 minutes are the most important. Remember ICE: Ice, Compression, and Elevation. The most important of these is compression. You will want to have the compression around the whole ankle by using a sock or piece of cloth. Then wrap tightly with a bandage. Don't forget to fill the space around the bone, or it will quickly fill with fluid. Apply crushed ice for 15 minutes at a time.

Once the swelling has stabilized, it is time to move that ankle. Flex it, walk. A physiotherapist can assess the movement of the ankle bones and determine if you have stretched or torn the ligaments. You may need taping before you can start on the right strengthening exercises to get you back to your activities and prevent future sprains.

For a Physiotherapy Assessment of your ankle contact us at A Body in Balance Therapy Centre, 33 Ochterloney Street, Suite 210, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia. For ankle problems or joint pain and stiffness in any of the other joints, call (902)469-3214.