

Ankle sprain



 Office d'éducation des patients du CUSM
MUHC Patient Education Office



This material is also available on the
MUHC Health Education Collection (<http://infotheque.muhc.ca/>)
MUHC Patient Education Office (www.muhcpatienteducation.ca).

This material was developed by the McGill
University Health Centre Emergency Department.

What is wrong?

You have injured ligaments in your ankle but no bone is broken. It may be very painful, tender, swollen and bruised.

In many cases, X-Rays are not necessary to make the diagnosis.

What should I do at home?

- ▶ Apply ice 3 to 5 times a day for 15 minutes until the swelling goes down. Use a towel to wrap the ice instead of putting it directly on your skin.
- ▶ If your ankle is swollen, keep it elevated. At night, put some pillows underneath your foot. During the day, keep it on a chair when you are sitting.
- ▶ The emergency doctor might have given you medication for pain. Take it as directed.
- ▶ If you were given crutches, use them as instructed. You can gradually put weight on the ankle as the pain improves.

When am I going to feel better?

In the first few days after the ankle injury, your ankle may be quite swollen, painful and bruised. Ankle sprains usually improve within 3 weeks but in certain cases it can take longer.

Should I see another doctor?

- ▶ You should contact your family doctor to let him or her know of your situation.
- ▶ In certain cases the emergency doctor may refer you to a specialist.
- ▶ Physiotherapy may be helpful.

When should I come back to the Emergency Department?

You should return right away if:

- ▶ The pain, crookedness or instability of the ankle gets worse over time
- ▶ Your foot feels numb or you don't feel your toes properly

Notes