

## **Ankle Sprains**

An ankle sprain causes swelling, warmth and pain, making it hard to move your ankle or put weight on it. A sprain means that the bones are not broken, but the tissue is damaged. Your doctor may:

1. Take X-rays.
2. Tell you how to use ice to reduce the swelling.
3. Give you a soft cast (air cast) or Ace wrap to protect your ankle and improve support.
4. Advise you to use crutches or a cane if you are having trouble walking.
5. Send you to a physical therapist.

### **Within the first 24 hours after the injury**

1. Put an ice pack on your ankle every 2 to 3 hours for 10 minutes at a time.
2. Keep the injured ankle propped on a pillow when you are resting.
3. Use an air cast or Ace wrap for support at first.
4. Use crutches or a cane if your doctor asks you to.
5. Take the medicine your doctor prescribes.

### **Within a day or two**

1. Exercise your ankle to increase the range of motion. Do not bend your foot so far that it causes more pain. The exercise is simple. Just bend your foot up and down 3 or 4 times a day. Work up to 10 times a day.
2. As pain and swelling decrease, slowly increase the amount of weight you put on the injured ankle. This will help improve the injury. Your physical therapist can show you exercises to improve your strength.

### **If you are not getting better. . .**

*If your ankle does not improve, that is, if the swelling and pain do not get better, or if your ankle feels too warm, contact your doctor.*