

TOE SPRAIN

What is a toe sprain?

A sprain is an injury to a joint that causes a stretch or tear in a ligament. Ligaments are strong bands of tissue that connect one bone to another.

How does it occur?

A toe sprain usually occurs when you stub your toe on a hard object or land awkwardly on your toes while running or jumping. It commonly occurs in kicking sports like soccer or martial arts. Activities that are done barefoot increase the risk of a toe sprain.

What are the symptoms?

Symptoms of a toe sprain include pain, swelling, and tenderness in your toe. You may be unable to walk or run.

How is it diagnosed?

Your healthcare provider will examine your toe. You may have an X-ray to be sure you have not broken any bones.

How is it treated?

Treatment may include the following:

- Apply ice packs to your injured toe for 20 to 30 minutes every 3 to 4 hours for 2 or 3 days or until the pain goes away.
- Elevate your foot on a pillow while you are lying down or on a chair or desk while you are sitting (to help reduce swelling).
- Wear a stiff shoe to prevent movement of your injured toe.
- “Buddy taping” (taping to the toe next to it) your injured toe for 1 to 3 weeks.
- Use crutches if not able to walk.
- Take an anti-inflammatory or other pain medicine prescribed by your healthcare provider (adults aged 65 years and older should not take non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medicine for more than 7 days without their healthcare provider’s approval).
- Do exercises given to you by your provider.

How long will the effects last?

Your toe may remain swollen with decreased flexibility and strength for several weeks. Sometimes the

joint swelling may take weeks or months to go away, and in some cases may be permanent. It is important to continue doing toe exercises during and even after you return to your normal activities.

When can I return to my sport or activity?

Everyone recovers from an injury at a different rate. Return to your activities will be determined by how soon your toe recovers, not by how many days or weeks it has been since your injury has occurred. In general, the longer you have symptoms before you start treatment, the longer it will take to get better. The goal of rehabilitation is to return you to your sport or activity as soon as is safely possible. If you return too soon you may worsen your injury.

In many cases, you will be able to return to your activities as you can tolerate walking, running or jumping.

How I prevent a toe sprain?

Toe sprains are usually the result of injuries that are not preventable. However, be sure to wear proper fitting footwear.

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TOE SPRAIN REHABILITATION EXERCISES

1. TOWEL PICKUP: With your heel on the ground, pick up a towel with your toes. Release. Repeat 10 to 20 times. When this gets easy, add more resistance by placing a book or small weight on the towel.

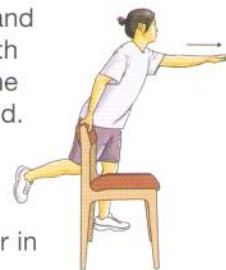


TOWEL PICKUP

2. BALANCE AND REACH EXERCISES

Stand upright next to a chair. This will provide you with balance if needed. Stand on the foot farthest from the chair. Try to raise the arch of your foot while keeping your toes on the floor.

A. Keep your foot in this position and reach forward in front of you with your hand farthest away from the chair, allowing your knee to bend. Repeat this 10 times while maintaining the arch height. This exercise can be made more difficult by reaching farther in front of you. Do 2 sets.



B. Stand in the same position as above. While maintaining your arch height, reach the hand farthest away from the chair across your body toward the chair. The farther you reach, the more challenging the exercise. Do 2 sets of 10.



BALANCE AND REACH EXERCISES