

# Ankle Sprain

The ankle is a joint where the bones of the legs and the feet meet. These bones are kept in place by ligaments. A sprain occurs when the ligaments are suddenly stretched or torn.

## Signs

- Pain or tenderness
- Swelling
- Bruising
- Not able to move the ankle well

## Your care

Your doctor may want you to:

- Have an x-ray.
- Wear a splint or an ace wrap to support the injured ankle.
- Take over-the-counter pain medicine.
- Keep your foot raised above the level of your heart for the first 2 days. This will reduce swelling and pain.
- Put ice on the injured ankle for 15 to 20 minutes each hour for 1 to 2 days. Put the ice in a plastic bag and place a towel between the bag of ice and your skin.
- Stay off your feet for 24 hours. Then walk slowly on the injured ankle.
- Use crutches or a cane until you can stand on your ankle without having pain.

## Call your doctor right away if your:

- Bruising, swelling or pain gets worse
- Toes below the injury feel cold when you touch them, are numb or blue

**Talk to your doctor or nurse if you have any questions or concerns.**