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Sores on ankles

Swelling is a common symptom that often resolves on its own with simple remedies such as ice and heat and rest. As such may be ignored by many people. One of the most common places people experience swelling is in the ankles. Many factors can lead to inflamed or swollen ankles, some more serious than others. 1. Varicose Veins One of the leading causes of swelling in the ankles is damage to the veins in the legs that carry blood from the legs back to the heart. Veins have small flaps called valves that keep the blood moving toward the heart. Sometimes, these veins become damaged. When this happens, blood and fluid can collect in the lower leg and ankles. This leads to calf and ankle swelling, especially after sitting or standing for long periods. Wearing compression stockings and elevating the legs helps relieve ankle swelling from varicose veins. If the condition becomes too uncomfortable, treatments are available. Among the many joints in the human body, one of the most integral is the talocrural region, which most people know as the ankle joint. This connection between the foot and the lower leg carries out many useful functions for the leg and the body as a whole. Though most people refer to the area as a singular joint, the ankle bones actually form two or three joints, depending on how experts classify them. 1. Talus Many bones can be viewed as “ankle bones,” but the only true ankle bone is the talus. Technically, the talus belongs to the tarsus group of foot bones, but it is unique in several ways. Unlike most other bones, the talus does not attach to any muscles. As such, its position is entirely reliant on the surrounding bones. Additionally, in comparison to other bones, it is covered in one of the highest percentages of articular cartilage. R&A Studio / Getty Images Ankle pain can be caused by many different injuries and conditions that affect the bones, tendons, and ligaments in the ankle. In addition to this, different types of arthritis also lead to ankle pain. Finding the source of the pain is the key to alleviating it and coming up with a long-term solution. While sprains are the most common source of injury and pain, other issues can arise as well. Anyone experiencing ankle issues will have discomfort and pain in their ankles, feet, and lower legs. The good news is there is usually a way to alleviate the pain! Of course, the cause must be determined first.Plantar FasciitisDreamstimePlantar fasciitis is a prevalent cause of heel and ankle pain. The condition is a result of inflammation in the tissue band connecting the toes to the heel bone, which usually causes shooting pains in the heels and ankles, primarily first thing in the morning. Movement helps alleviate the pain in most cases. Patients may notice returning or worsening pain after sitting or standing for long periods. When the foot is resting, it allows inflammation to build up in the tissue band, which leads to the pain felt when walking. Plantar fasciitis pain gets better during exercise in many cases, but the pain will be worse afterward. This material must not be used for commercial purposes, or in any hospital or medical facility. Failure to comply may result in legal action. WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW: What is an ankle sprain? An ankle sprain happens when 1 or more ligaments in your ankle joint stretch or tear. Ligaments are tough tissues that connect bones. Ligaments support your joints and keep your bones in place. What are the signs and symptoms of an ankle sprain? Trouble moving your ankle or foot Pain when you touch or put weight on your ankle Bruised, swollen, or misshapen ankle How is an ankle sprain diagnosed? Your healthcare provider will ask you about your injury and examine you. Tell him or her if you heard a snap or pop when you were injured. Your healthcare provider will check the movement and strength of your joint. You may be asked to move the joint yourself. Tell a healthcare provider if you have ever had an allergic reaction to contrast liquid. You may need any of the following: A joint x-ray is a picture of the bones and tissues in your joints. You may be given contrast liquid as a shot into your joint before the x-ray. This contrast liquid will help your joint show up better on the x-ray. A joint x-ray with contrast liquid is called an arthrogram. An MRI may show the sprain. You may be given contrast liquid to help the pictures show up better. Do not enter the MRI room with anything metal. Metal can cause serious injury. Tell a healthcare provider if you have any metal in or on your body. How is an ankle sprain treated? Support devices, such as a brace, cast, or splint, may be needed to limit your movement and protect your joint. You may need to use crutches to decrease your pain as you move around. Medicines: NSAIDs , such as ibuprofen, help decrease swelling, pain, and fever. This medicine is available with or without a doctor's order. NSAIDs can cause stomach bleeding or kidney problems in certain people. If you take blood thinner medicine, always ask your healthcare provider if NSAIDs are safe for you. Always read the medicine label and follow directions. Acetaminophen decreases pain and fever. It is available without a doctor's order. Ask how much to take and how often to take it. Follow directions. Read the labels of all other medicines you are using to see if they also contain acetaminophen, or ask your doctor or pharmacist. Acetaminophen can cause liver damage if not taken correctly. Do not use more than 4 grams (4,000 milligrams) total of acetaminophen in one day. Prescription pain medicine may be given. Ask your healthcare provider how to take this medicine safely. Some prescription pain medicines contain acetaminophen. Do not take other medicines that contain acetaminophen without talking to your healthcare provider. Too much acetaminophen may cause liver damage. Prescription pain medicine may cause constipation. Ask your healthcare provider how to prevent or treat constipation. Physical therapy may be recommended. A physical therapist teaches you exercises to help improve movement and strength, and to decrease pain. Surgery may be needed to repair or replace a torn ligament if your sprain does not heal with other treatments. Your healthcare provider may use screws to attach the bones in your ankle together. The screws may help support your ankle and make it stable. Ask your healthcare provider for more information about surgery to treat your ankle sprain. How can I manage my ankle sprain? Rest your ankle so that it can heal. Return to normal activities as directed. Apply ice on your ankle for 15 to 20 minutes every hour or as directed. Use an ice pack, or put crushed ice in a plastic bag. Cover it with a towel. Ice helps prevent tissue damage and decreases swelling and pain. Compress your ankle. Ask if you should wrap an elastic bandage around your injured ligament. An elastic bandage provides support and helps decrease swelling and movement so your joint can heal. Wear as long as directed. Elevate your ankle above the level of your heart as often as you can. This will help decrease swelling and pain. Prop your ankle on pillows or blankets to keep it elevated comfortably. How can I prevent another ankle sprain? Let your ankle heal. Find out how long your ligament needs to heal. Do not do any physical activity until your healthcare provider says it is okay. If you start activity too soon, you may develop a more serious injury. Always warm up and stretch before you exercise or play sports. Use the right equipment. Always wear shoes that fit well and are made for the activity that you are doing. You may also need ankle supports, elbow and knee pads, or braces. When should I seek immediate care? You have severe pain in your ankle. Your foot or toes are cold or numb. Your ankle becomes more weak or unstable (wobbly). You are unable to put any weight on your ankle or foot. Your swelling has increased or returned. When should I call my doctor? Your pain does not go away, even after treatment. You have questions or concerns about your condition or care. Care Agreement You have the right to help plan your care. Learn about your health condition and how it may be treated. Discuss treatment options with your healthcare providers to decide what care you want to receive. You always have the right to refuse treatment. The above information is an educational aid only. It is not intended as medical advice for individual conditions or treatments. Talk to your doctor, nurse or pharmacist before following any medical regimen to see if it is safe and effective for you. © Copyright IBM Corporation 2021. Information is for End User's use only and may not be sold, redistributed or otherwise used for commercial purposes. All illustrations and images included in CareNotes® are the copyrighted property of A.D.A.M., Inc. or IBM Watson Health. Learn more about Ankle Sprain IBM Watson MicromedexAcetaminophen and Ibuprofen Dosing in ChildrenMuscle StrainSprainSymptom checkerSymptoms and treatmentsAnkle SprainRotator Cuff InjuryMayo Clinic ReferenceACL injuryPatellofemoral pain syndromeRotator cuff injuryWrist pain Always consult your healthcare provider to ensure the information displayed on this page applies to your personal circumstances. Medical Disclaimer There are two types of clues as to whether a bone is broken or not. They're called signs and symptoms. Symptoms are things only the patient can feel while signs are things anyone (patient or not) can see or touch. Basically, to stick with the sign terminology, these are things you can read. To get symptoms out of the way, you should know that a broken ankle only has one, pain. A broken ankle hurts. It hurts worse when you move it. It hurts ridiculously fricking bad if you try to stand or put weight on it. My recommendation: don't do that. The only sure-fire way to know if any bone is broken is by seeing the actual broken bone. That's the sign, the one that clears up any doubt. You definitely can see if a bone is broken by looking at it directly with the naked eye, but there's usually a bunch of pesky flesh and blood in the way. Usually, you need to use an X-ray to see a broken bone. Of course, when the broken ends of a femur are sticking out of your thigh, it's pretty much a dead giveaway. Barring either a really nasty compound fracture—or a creepy zombie style cutaway just to get a look—you'll need that X-ray. At the end, I'll show you what a broken ankle can look like on an X-ray (albeit, in this case, with a really tiny fracture). For now, let's concentrate on the signs of a broken ankle we usually can see, and we'll start with deformity. 1 Leslie Antonis Deformity is a medical term for, well, being deformed. It's when a part of the anatomy isn't formed the way it's supposed to be. It can be a bone that's bent in the wrong place or a foot that's twisted at an odd angle. It can also be as simple as a grossly swollen ankle. Swelling is a really common form of deformity and it is from blood or other fluid accumulating at the site of the injury. Swelling isn't a great indicator of a fracture because it comes from the soft tissues—that pesky flesh and blood—that can't be "broken." 2 Leslie Antonis Bruising is another common sign of a broken ankle. Bruising or discoloration is from blood. Usually, blood is contained in the blood vessels (arteries and veins). After an injury, blood leaks out of the blood vessels and pools in the flesh and muscle, where you can see it. There's one more sign commonly associated with broken bones: crepitus. This one is harder to imagine. It can't be seen, but it can be felt. It's the broken bits of bone grinding on each other with movement or manipulation of the injury. To the person feeling for it, it can be described as a bag of gravel. Not fun. 3 Leslie Antonis The definitive test for a broken bone is an X-ray. There's a fine line between a fracture and a sprain, so an X-ray is often the only way to tell the difference. Treatment of a broken ankle starts with an X-ray. Thanks for your feedback! What are your concerns? Verywell Health uses only high-quality sources, including peer-reviewed studies, to support the facts within our articles. Read our editorial process to learn more about how we fact-check and keep our content accurate, reliable, and trustworthy. American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons. OrthoInfo. Ankle Fractures (Broken Ankle). Reviewed March 2013.

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