

# FOOTPRINTS

AN INFORMATIONAL NEWSLETTER FOR PATIENTS OF APMA MEMBER PODIATRISTS

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## STAY ON TRACK WITH TODAY'S PODIATRIST

It's the beginning of the year, which means you probably made some resolutions towards a new you. Perhaps you decided to eat better and exercise more. While these are both great ideas, exercising too much too soon can cause overuse injuries, including foot and ankle sprains and fractures. Don't let your newfound enthusiasm sideline your fitness goals! Today's podiatrist can help you stay on your feet all year round. Read on to learn more about foot and ankle sprains and fractures and how today's podiatrist can help.

### WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A SPRAIN AND A FRACTURE?

A foot or ankle sprain is a soft tissue injury, while a fracture is actually a break in the bone.

### WHAT IS THE MOST COMMON CAUSE OF FOOT AND ANKLE SPRAINS AND FRACTURES?

Injuries—people who are highly active in sports and exercise are particularly vulnerable to foot and ankle sprains and fractures.

### HOW DO I KNOW IF I HAVE A FOOT OR ANKLE SPRAIN OR FRACTURE?

The most common symptoms of a foot or ankle sprain or fracture are:

- pain;
- swelling;
- bruising; and
- difficulty walking on the affected foot or ankle.



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It is important to note that not all foot or ankle pains are sprains or fractures. Sometimes, our feet and ankles get sore from overuse. Maybe you walked an extra few miles or ran a little too hard. If you hurt your foot or ankle, it's best to err on the side of caution. Let "RICE" help you remember what to do:

## REST



**Rest the affected area.** Stay off the injured foot or ankle until it can be fully evaluated. Walking, running, or playing sports on an injured foot or ankle may make the injury worse.

## ICE



**Apply ice to the affected area** as soon as possible, and reapply it for 15–20 minutes every three or four hours for the first 48 hours after your injury. Ice can decrease inflammation.

## COMPRESSION



**Wrap an elastic bandage**, such as an Ace® wrap, around the affected foot or ankle. The wrapping should be snug, but not so tight as to cut off circulation.

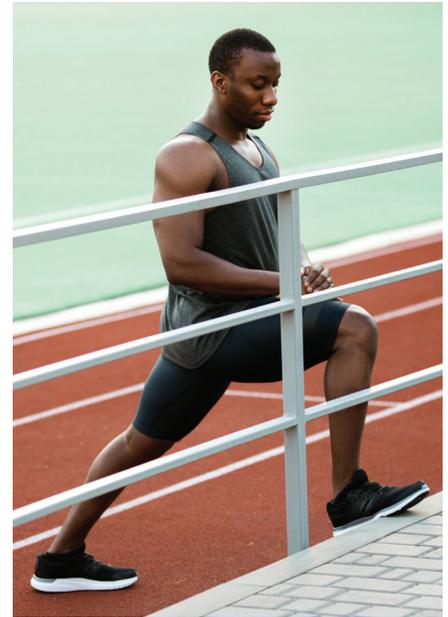
## ELEVATION



**Elevate the affected extremity** on a couple of pillows; ideally, your foot or ankle should be higher than your heart. Keeping your foot or ankle elevated also decreases swelling.

If your pain persists for more than two weeks, it is time to make an appointment with your podiatrist. He or she will carefully examine your feet and ankles and take a complete medical history. After completing a few tests, your podiatrist will develop a customized treatment plan that will get you up and moving as soon as possible.

Prevention is possible. By following our quick and easy tips, you can help prevent common causes of foot and ankle injuries.



## QUICK AND EASY TIPS TO KEEP YOU ON YOUR FEET

- 1** Warm up prior to physical activity. This simple step can help prevent sprains and fractures.
- 2** Wear the proper shoes to help support your feet to keep injuries at bay.
- 3** If you're an athlete or compete in athletic events, talk to your podiatrist to determine which shoes are best for your sport. You will be surprised by what a difference the right shoes can make.
- 4** Replace your athletic or running shoes every 300–400 miles.