

Ankle Injuries

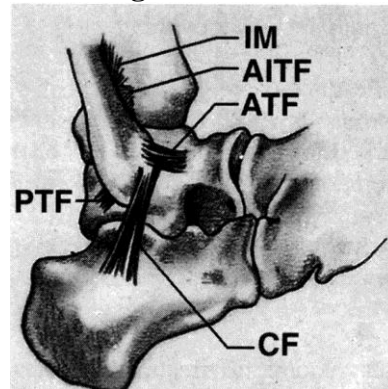
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Overview- One of the more common injuries in children and adolescents involve the ankle. This can occur as a result of a fall, twist, or because of specific anatomic causes. An inversion type injury is the most common mechanism. This frequently injures structures on the lateral aspect of the ankle (outside). These injuries in younger children (under the age of 15 years) often result in a growth plate injury rather than a ligament “sprain.” This is because the growth centers and bones in children are weaker than the ligaments. These growth plate injuries are called Salter Harris growth plate fractures and require a period of immobilization (cast or CAM walker). Older individuals injure the ligaments resulting in a sprain.

Salter Harris Growth Plate Injury



Ankle Ligaments



Initial Injury Care-

- Immobilization with a splint or cast
- Crutches
- Ice therapy 15-20 mins. every few hours
- Pain and inflammation control with Tylenol, Advil or Aleve

Subsequent Physical Therapy-

- Calf stretches
 - 3-4 times a day, knee straight and bent, hold stretch 30 seconds
- Range of motion exercises (Spell the A,B,C’s with your big toe)
- Strengthening exercises:
 - 1-2 sets/day, 15-20 repetitions, concentrate on form
 - Inversion and eversion (in and out), dorsi and plantar flexion (up and down)
- Proprioception (balancing on one foot, a babst board or skate board)
- Ice therapy after PT, 15-20 mins.

Returning To Sports- This should be done in an ankle support orthotic and under the direction of a doctor, therapist, or trainer. Continued swelling or pain indicates the ankle is not 100%. Discuss this with your doctor and continue the above physical therapy/ice. Remember, the most common reason for an ankle injury is a previous injury that was not fully healed.

Dr. Locke’s clinical care team

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