

Ankle Sprain Protocol **Rick Hammesfahr, MD**

Grades 1 and 2

Phase One (1st 48 hours):

Goals = Control edema

- Promote optimal tissue healing environment
- PRICE = Protection, Rest, Ice, Compression, Elevation
- 1. Aircast/Stirrup brace or other device for protection/compression
- 2. WBAT with immobilizing device and crutches prn
- 3. Ice 15 minutes every 2 hours while awake with elevation
- 4. Elevate limb as much as possible
- 5. AROM into DF/PF in pain-free ranges
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Phase Two (Day 3 to week 2-3, use severity of injury/impairment as a guide):

Goals = Control edema

- Promote optimal collagen repair
- Restore gait
- Restore ROM/flexibility/mobility
- Increase strength of anterior/lateral compartments
- 1. Wean from assistive device, continue brace prn
- 2. Ice/elevate, other modalities prn
- 3. Grade 1/2 mobilization ankle, subtalar, midtarsal joints
- 4. Progress AROM to PROM for PF/DF/invert/evert
- 5. Heel cord stretching:
 - a. Towel stretch
 - b. Wall stretch
 - c. Step stretch
- 6. Theraband for eversion, dorsiflexion
- 7. Stationary or recumbent bike

Criteria to progress to phase 3

Walk without limp, pain-free full ROM, heel raise through involved ankle

Phase Three (week 2/3 - return to full function)

Goals = Restore strength all muscle groups involved LE

- Increase balance/proprioception
- Increase power
- Sport-specific training
- Functional tasks
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1. Continue to address impairments from phase 2
2. OKC theraband for DF/PF/invert/evert
3. When mod to high resist OKC at 50 reps pain-free, progress to CKC theraband standing
 on involved LE
4. BAPS
5. One-leg balance
 - a. floor eyes open to eyes closed
 - b. mat eyes open to eyes closed
 - c. wedge
 - d. BAPS
 - e. add ball catches for a-d
6. Storking on floor → mat → wedge/BAPS
7. Braiding/Karioke
8. Step-ups - forward and lateral
9. Patient education on preventing reinjury
10. Proprioception, focus on peroneal activation
11. Jumps/Hops
12. Sport-specific / Job-specific / Functional training

Grades 3 (post-operative ligament reconstruction)

Phase One (4-6 weeks s/p surgery):

Goals = Increase weight bearing status

- Control edema
- Promote optimal tissue healing environment
- Increase ROM
- 1. WBAT with stirrup brace
- 2. Modalities prn for pain, edema
- 3. Gentle AROM for DF/PF
- 4. Stationary/recumbent bike, no resistance (ROM)
- 5. Isometrics for eversion
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Phase Two (6-12 weeks s/p surgery):

Progress as indicated in phases 2 and 3 of protocol for grades 1 and 2 sprains

Goals = Return to sports/full activity at 12 weeks if ankle stable and normal peroneal performance