



High Ankle Sprain (Syndesmosis Ligament Injury)



Overview

This is a stretch or tear of one or more ligaments above the ankle. The ligaments form the syndesmosis. They connect the bones of the lower leg (the tibia and fibula) and give your ankle stability.

Causes

How do you get a high ankle sprain? It happens when your foot is twisted so that it turns outward. Often, this injury is caused by high-impact sports when you're running, jumping or changing direction quickly. You'll see these injuries in sports like football, soccer, lacrosse and basketball. The ligaments of the syndesmosis can also be injured if you break your ankle.

Symptoms

What are the symptoms? You have pain that radiates up through your leg, especially when you turn your foot outward. Walking up steps can be painful. You may not have much swelling or bruising. Because of this, you may not realize how bad your injury is.

Treatment

How do we treat it? We care for a high ankle sprain much like a common ankle sprain. Things like rest, ice and a walking boot help. Physical therapy can help, too. But a high ankle sprain may take a lot longer to heal than a common ankle sprain. And for a severe sprain, you may need surgery. Your doctor will create a plan that's right for you.