



## ANKLE SPRAINS



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### MEET THE TEAM Katelinn Burton

Meet Katelinn Burton, a Medical Assistant at NorthPointe Foot & Ankle. Katelinn worked for Lapeer County EMS prior to joining the NorthPointe team. She received her post high school education from Baker College and Dorsey Schools.

In her role, Katelinn greets you in the exam room and requests basic information to update your medical records and gives the doctor an overview of your concerns. She will then follow the doctors direction to complete your care.



When not in the office, she enjoys being with her five children, attending their sporting events and playing games.

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An ankle sprain is an injury to one or more ligaments in the ankle, usually on the outside of the ankle. Ligaments are bands of tissue – like rubber bands – that connect one bone to another and bind the joints together. In the ankle joint, ligaments provide stability by limiting side-to-side movement.

The severity of an ankle sprain depends on whether the ligament is stretched, partially torn, or completely torn, as well as on the number of ligaments involved. Ankle sprains are not the same as strains, which affect muscles rather than ligaments.

Sprained ankles often result from a fall, a sudden twist, or a blow that forces the ankle joint out of its normal position. Ankle sprains commonly occur while participating in sports, wearing inappropriate shoes or boots, or walking or running on an uneven surface.

Sometimes ankle sprains occur because a person is born with weak ankles. Previous ankle or foot injuries can also weaken the ankle and lead to sprains.

The symptoms of ankle sprains may include:

- Pain or soreness
- Swelling
- Bruising
- Difficulty walking
- Stiffness in the joint

Any ankle sprain – whether it's your first or your fifth – requires prompt medical attention.

There are four key reasons why an ankle sprain should be promptly evaluated and treated by a foot and ankle surgeon:

- An untreated ankle sprain may lead to chronic ankle instability, a condition marked by persistent discomfort and a "giving way" of the ankle. Weakness in the leg may also develop.
- A more severe ankle injury may have occurred along with the sprain. This might include a serious bone fracture that, if left untreated, could lead to complications.

- An ankle sprain may be accompanied by a foot injury that causes discomfort but has gone unnoticed thus far.
- Rehabilitation of a sprained ankle needs to begin right away. If rehabilitation is delayed, the injury may be less likely to heal properly.

### Non-surgical Treatment

When you have an ankle sprain, rehabilitation is crucial—and it starts the moment your treatment begins. Your NorthPointe Foot & Ankle surgeon may recommend one or more of the following treatment options:

- **Rest.** Stay off the injured ankle. Walking may cause further injury.
- **Ice.** Apply an ice pack to the injured area, placing a thin towel between the ice and the skin. Use ice for 20 minutes and then wait at least 40 minutes before icing again.
- **Compression.** An elastic wrap may be recommended to control swelling.
- **Elevation.** The ankle should be raised slightly above the level of your heart to reduce swelling.
- **Early physical therapy.** Your podiatrist may start you on a rehabilitation program as soon as possible to promote healing and increase your range of motion.
- **Medications.** Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), such as ibuprofen, may be recommended to reduce pain and inflammation. In some cases, prescription pain medications are needed to provide adequate relief.



### When Is Surgery Needed?

In more severe cases, surgery may be required to adequately treat an ankle sprain. Surgery often involves repairing the damaged ligament or ligaments. Your NorthPointe Foot & Ankle surgeon will discuss with you the surgical procedure best suited for your case based on the type and severity of your injury as well as your activity level.

# Winter Foot Wear

It's time to check last year's boots for proper fit and examine their condition. Chances are, it is time for a new pair. When shopping for any footwear, keep in mind protection, support, and comfort, in addition to the style.

The podiatrists of NorthPointe Foot & Ankle have this boot selection advice to share:

- **Be sure boots are insulated and waterproof.** Even if the boot maker says the boots are waterproof, still treat the pair with a waterproofing product. The body has to work harder to compensate for moisture, so try to minimize as much foot moisture as possible.
- **Select natural material**, like leather, that allows proper airflow and keep feet dry.
- Although rubber boots will keep you dry, **rubber does not breathe**. Make sure that any rubber boots purchased are fully lined to help absorb foot moisture.
- **Boots with rigid shaped soles limit natural foot movement** and provide little, if any, arch support. Cushioned insoles and arch supports could be added.
- **The best traction** is received from boots with a rubber sole and deep grooves.
- **Styles with narrow toes and high heels** often cause pain and numbness. Select a lower heel or stacked style for additional support. Choose a style with plenty of toe room, a firm heel counter and traction to ensure stability.



- **To provide warmth**, ski sock liners are a way to keep feet warmer without adding bulk. Liners are worn under regular socks.
- **Above all – listen to your feet.** If a boot is not comfortable, the footwear selected is not the best.

## Shopping tips:

- Try boots on later in the day as feet tend to swell throughout the day.
- Try the style on with the thickness of socks you expect to be wearing with the boot.
- Most individuals have two different size feet. Buy for the larger sized foot.
- Boots should feel comfortable as you try them on. No “breaking in” period should be necessary.



## Warm up Your Neighbors!

NorthPointe Foot & Ankle is joining the Berkley Senior Center in collecting **new** gloves, hats, scarves and socks for all ages. The gifts will be distributed to those less fortunate in the community before Christmas.

**Now—December 8. Donations accepted at NorthPointe Foot & Ankle Office or Berkley Senior Center.**

# Avoid High Heel Stress

Holiday and New Year's celebrations are occasions where we wear our finest fashions. However, the desire to look good sometimes comes with the aches caused by high heeled shoes.

Many high heeled shoes for women have pointed toe boxes. The narrow toe box squeezes the toes and the heel height causes a shift in the body column that must be compensated for by the foot. These issues generally cause aches and soreness of the feet and back, and can often result in sprains or other complications.

The doctors of NorthPointe Foot & Ankle have a few suggestions to share with anyone wearing high heels for special occasions:

- Minimize the amount of time in the shoes. Wear boots or other comfortable shoes on your way to the event and return to those comfortable shoes as you depart.
- Place shoe pads in the inside of the shoes for added support and comfort for the ball of your foot.
- Consider bringing “purse slippers” – or compact slippers – that are designed to fit in a small purse. Slip those on as aches begin.
- A heel height of  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch to  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch is usually well tolerated.
- Consider shoes with an ankle strap or other ankle support to avoid sprains.



*The doctors and staff of NorthPointe Foot & Ankle wish you and your family a safe and healthy holiday season!*