Dr. Pathik Shah
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DIAGNOSIS: ANKLE SPRAIN

ACUTE PHASE (1-3 DAYS POST INJURY)

GOALS:
Pain and edema control
Protect from further injury
Normalize gait

EXERCISES/RESTRICTIONS:
Protected weight bearing (with crutches) as tolerated
Elevation
Cold therapy
Compression
Taping, splints, pneumatic walking boot, semi-rigid ankle stirrup, lace up brace, CAM boot or immobilization to protect injured ligaments from additional injury

SUBACUTE PHASE (4-14 DAYS POST INJURY)

GOALS:
Pain and edema control
Pain free ROM
Protect from further injury
Limit loss of strength

EXERCISES/RESTRICTIONS:
Wean crutches when gait has normalized
Modalities to reduce pain and edema (ice, electrical stimulation)
Joint mobilization- talocrural and subtalar joints
Pain free ROM
- Begin with dorsi- and plantarflexion exercises
- Add inversion and eversion as pain and tenderness decreases
- Stretch gastric/soleus complex- start NWB and progress to WB positions
- Toe curls
- Ankle alphabet
- Stationary bike

Progress gait training
Strengthening- isometrics
Protection- wean from splints and braces as tolerated and as pain / edema decreases

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REHAB PHASE (2-6 WEEKS POST INJURY)

GOALS:

ROM to normal
Strength to normal
Increase endurance

EXERCISES/RESTRICTIONS:

Full weight bearing as tolerated
Stretch achilles, gastrocnemius / soleus
Progress strengthening in all directions from active range of motion exercises to resistive exercises

- Use free weights
- Exercise bands

Progress to closed chain activities

- Bilateral toe raise progressing to single leg
- Bilateral squat progressing to single leg
- Step up and down

Proprioceptive exercises

- Wobble board
- BAPS
- Foam pad
- Pillow

Wean assistive devices if not yet weaned
Increase endurance with cross training- swimming, biking, walking etc.
Modalities OK
Home exercise program

FUNCTIONAL PHASE (>6 WEEKS POST INJURY)

GOALS:

Return to full activity and function
Initiate sport specific exercises with goal to return to sport
Return to sport- when patient has normal full ankle ROM, normal strength and no pain

EXERCISES/RESTRICTIONS:

Progress strengthening
Coordination and agility training

- Lunges
- Hopping (Progress bilateral to injured leg only to whole foot to toes only)
- Step exercises (Forward and side to side)
- Running when able to walk fast without pain, start smooth surface and progress to uneven surfaces
- Cutting exercises
- Figure 8's (start with big circles and progress to tighter circles)
- Jump rope

Modalities
Home exercise program

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PROPHYLACTIC PHASE (INJURY PREVENTION)

GOALS:

Injury prevention and maintenance

EXERCISES/RESTRICTIONS:

Strengthening including dorsiflexion and peroneals
Functional proprioceptive drills- speed, balance, coordination and agility
Cardiovascular endurance training
Proper footwear
Prophylactic external support