

## Repetitive ankle Sprains

By Dr. Amelia Mazgaloff, D.C

The ankle joint is a wonder of function and structure – simultaneously stable yet mobile. Your ankles, because they are on the receiving end of your body weight during walking and running, are very susceptible to strains and sprains. When you turn or “sprain” your ankle, you may suffer a variety of symptoms, depending upon which structures (ligament, muscle, or bone) are injured and the degree of damage or tearing. Immediately after an injury, your body begins the process of repair. During healing, new connective tissue (so called “scar tissue”) is formed and deposited in the injured area in an attempt to repair the injured tissue. With repetitive sprains scar tissue is formed in abundance. Over time the fibers in the scar tissue tend to shrink and become densely packed producing hard mass called and “adhesion”. This adhesion almost always restricts the motion of the joint, so the stresses with walking and running redistributed to other parts of the ankle, knees, hips, and even all the way up to the low back.

### Rx

Even an injury that is just a simple “turn” of the ankle needs to be treated as soon after the injury. Icing should be frequent (5 minutes every half-hour) for the first 48 to 72 hours. While immobilization and taping were sufficient treatment for mild to moderate sprains in the past, most current research shows they are inadequate for optimal healing. Contemporary treatment

involves thorough examination of the joints, muscles, nerves and ligaments, muscle work in the form of ART (Active Release Techniques) is best, EMS (Electrical Muscle Stimulation), to decrease the swelling, adjustments of the joints of the foot, ankle, knee and in some instances low back, as well as neuromuscular re-education type of exercises, all of which will decrease the amount of scar tissue and adhesion formation, promote faster healing and return you to pre-injury strength, stability and mobility.

For more information on this article or the **Active Release Technique** you can reach Dr. Mazgaloff at **(415) 546-1461** or on the web at [www.chirohealthsf.com](http://www.chirohealthsf.com).

Next Month: Runner's knee