

# Knee, Ankle & Foot Pain

## Summary

Knee, ankle and foot pain is extremely common, often a result of sports injuries, strain or trauma to the affected area. Discomfort or injury can impact the sufferer's ability to do high-impact exercise, physical activities or in extreme cases, their capacity to walk. The knee joint in particular is the most prone to injury of all the joints in the human body, as it is heavily relied upon in most sports or physical activities, whilst at the same time supporting the majority of the body's weight.

The usual suspects of ice, heat and soft tissue treatment can generally help knee, ankle or foot pain. However, sometimes the above is not enough and patients often find themselves needing advanced soft tissue approaches and dynamic biomechanical assessments to help further assess the different causes that creates that contributes to recurrent lower limb pain.

Knee, ankle or foot pain can be both a debilitating and restrictive condition for sufferers. Day to day activities such as sports, running or even simply walking can all be affected, making it difficult to stay active and avoid a sedentary lifestyle.

The knee is made up of the knee cap, the fibula, tibia (shin) and femur (thigh) bones, held together by cartilage, tendons and ligaments. Common injuries inflicted on the knees include tendonitis, cartilage tears and sprained ligaments, which are often caused by running injuries as well as age.

The ankle is a similarly complex joint, responsible for foot movement – particularly walking. Many injuries to this joint are a result of ankle sprain, arthritis or injury to the Achilles tendon.

Each foot contains 26 bones, supported by ligaments, muscles and tendons. Foot injuries are common, often a result of sports injury, trauma, or wearing improper footwear such as high heels or flat shoes with little arch support.



Often the best treatment for knee, ankle and foot pain is rest, to take pressure off the injury and reduce swelling

Treatments like Active Release Technique, Joint and NeuroMyoFascial Manipulation as well as a decent functional movement analysis can generally help to ease the symptoms of knee, ankle and foot pain.

## Causes of knee, ankle & foot pain

Age	Workplace injuries
Sports injuries	Trauma
Abnormalities in the bone or joints.	Tendonitis
Arthritis (osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, gout etc.)	Sprained ligaments
Dislocation	Plantar warts (verruucas)
Patello femoral syndrome (knee)	Metatarsalgia (ball of foot pain)
Fungal skin or toenail infections	Plantar fasciitis (heel pain)
Cracked heels	Calluses, corns and bunions
Sprained ankle	Stress fracture
Tarsal tunnel syndrome	Achilles tendon rupture
	Joint infection

## Other symptoms of knee, ankle & foot pain

People with knee, ankle or foot pain may experience the following symptoms:

Pain in the knee, ankle or foot	Limping when trying to walk
Tenderness in the knee, ankle or foot	Locking of the knee
Redness around the affected area	Trouble with knee motion
Swelling of the knee, ankle or foot	Problems with ankle motion
Stiffness when trying to move	Inability or problems bearing weight on the knees, ankles or feet
Numbness or tingling	

## Top tips for knee, ankle & foot care

wear good, supportive shoes when walking or exercising

maintain a healthy weight so as to avoid placing excess pressure on your joint

avoid wearing stilettos or flat shoes

Train the muscles of your foot, ankle, shins, calves and up the kinetic chain right for your sport.

practice stretching and strengthening exercises

utilise shoe inserts to improve posture only where necessary

## Effective treatment of knee, ankle & foot pain

When experiencing knee, ankle or foot pain, the following habits and aids can help to relieve pain:

Hold a heat pack or ice pack against the location of the pain  
Use compression bandages  
Elevate the leg  
Use a cane  
Use ankle braces

Practice knee, ankle or pain conditioning exercises  
Rest any joints which are causing you pain  
Anti-inflammatory medications  
Electrical stimulation

For chronic knee, ankle or foot pain, physical therapies such as Active Release Technique, joint and neuromyofascial manipulation as well as a decent functional movement analysis may help to relive on-going pain. In some severe cases, surgery may be required.

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Dr Shermain Wong is a chiropractor at Jurmaine Health with expertise in general treatment and over 6 years experience.

With a Masters in Clinical Chiropractic from RMIT University, Shermain has provided chiropractic and movement rehabilitation services at international sporting competitions, professional dancers, professional football players and professional athletes.

At Jurmaine Health, she helps patients address and treat common musculoskeletal symptoms and conditions, including back pain, neck pain; shoulder pain; nerve pain, joint pain and many other conditions

She is a member of Sport Medicine Australia, College of Osteopathy and Chiropractic Association, Australian Association of Musculoskeletal Medicine and International Society of Clinical Rehabilitation Specialists.

With her experience in Sports Medicine and treating Sports Injuries, she is a sought after expert for professional athletes and sports clubs. She has worked with the Coburg Lions VFL club, Melbourne Ice Hockey Women, World Ironman Championships, Australia



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