

Homework: Ankle

Towel Stretch



Wrap a towel around the sole of your foot and pull towards you.

Single Leg Stance (SLS)



Stand on one ankle, cross your arms across your chest. Hold for 30 seconds. Stand on a soft surface like a pillow or seat cushion to increase difficulty. If one is not available simply close your eyes

Heel Lifts



Rise up onto your toes from a neutral standing position. To increase difficulty, stand on the edge

of a step with your heels hanging off or from SLS.

Heel Taps



Stand on a stair on the ankle you want to train. With the opposite foot, slowly lower body until your heel hits the floor and come back up.

Increase step height to increase difficulty.

SLS hops



Draw a line on the floor in chalk or with tape. Hop forward and back or side to side for 15 seconds. To increase difficulty increase your time or the height and or distance you have to hop.

The Lineup:

Featured Staff of MVH Sports Medicine



Angela Stahl ATC, CSCS

“I think probably the most rewarding part of my job is seeing kids return to the field after a prolonged injury.”

In the brisk evenings of the late fall and early winter you can find athletic trainers making the transition between seasons. Juggling the tournaments at the end of the fall season and preparing for the new beginnings of the winter activities.

Amongst these is Angela Stahl, a certified athletic trainer and certified strength and conditioning specialist for Miami Valley Hospital. These days Angela can be found tending to the Knights of Alter High School in Kettering.

What is the most common injury you see?

Angela: The typical, or most common, injury that I see is a lateral ankle sprain. This is usually caused by an athlete coming down from a jump wrong or from taking a misstep and twisting the ankle. Usually, the athlete describes feeling or hearing a pop in the ankle. The athlete may or may not be able to put weight on the involved leg. Pain, the majority of time, is on the outside of the ankle near the ankle bone (lateral malleolus).

Describe your diagnosis of the ankle injury.

Angela: My evaluation of the injury first starts with seeing if there is any kind of deformity or anything noticeably “wrong” with the ankle. I then will palpate the ankle, lower leg, and foot, to see exactly where the athlete is most sore. Range of motion and strength testing are assessed as well as any special tests that need to be done. Usually there are differences in the evaluation between the injured ankle and the uninjured ankle.

What is the most gratifying part of your job as an Athletic Trainer?

Angela: The most gratifying moment of working with high school athletes would be hearing a sincere “thank you” from the athlete and the parents after helping with an extended rehab, such as an ACL tear. It is very gratifying to see that first moment the athlete returns to the sport that he/she loves, knowing that I helped get that athlete back.

What advice do you have for an ankle injury?

Angela: One of the first things to do for an ankle injury is R.I.C.E.—rest, ice, compression, and elevation. This can help with managing the acute swelling that can occur with any injury. Once an athlete is capable, introducing a strengthening program for the ankle is very important.

With an ankle sprain, the ligaments and supporting structures are torn or stretched out and therefore the ankle is no longer as stable as it was prior to the injury. Strengthening the surrounding musculature can help prevent re-injury. Also, wearing a supportive brace is beneficial after an injury as well as for injury prevention.

What sports cause the most ankle injuries?

Angela: Most injuries occur in sports that require a lot of jumping or agility type movements. Sports such as volleyball, basketball, soccer, and football present the majority of ankle sprains.

Reflecting on her career choice, Angela knows immediately what keeps her in the game. “I think probably the most rewarding part of my job is seeing kids return to the field after a prolonged injury.”