

PREVENTIVE MEASURES

None known, though maintaining appropriate warm-up and stretching before practice or competition, as well as appropriate conditioning, flexibility and strength may help.

EXPECTED OUTCOME

Usually curable with appropriate treatment that usually requires surgery.

POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS

- Frequent recurrence of symptoms resulting in a chronic repetitive problem.
- Permanent injury to muscles and nerves of the leg, foot and ankle.
- Performance will be affected and may even have to stop performing due to pain if activity is continued without treatment.

GENERAL TREATMENT CONSIDERATIONS

Initial treatment consists of medications and ice to relieve pain, stretching and strengthening exercises of the foot, ankle and leg, rest and modifying the activity which initially caused the problem to occur. These can all be carried out at home for acute cases, though referral to a physical therapist or athletic trainer for further evaluation and treatment may be recommended. This usually, however, is unsuccessful. Some may wish to alter their activity to avoid exertional pain. Otherwise, surgery is recommended to release (cut) the fascia to relieve pressure on the structures within the compartment. Return to the same level of sports after surgery may be difficult for some people following surgery.

While this may be done with open incisions several inches in length, Dr. Safran often performs this procedure with an arthroscope. It is an outpatient procedure.

MEDICATION

- Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medications, such as aspirin and ibuprofen (do not take if surgery planned in 7 days or less), or other minor pain relievers, such as acetaminophen are often recommended. Take these as directed by your physician. Contact him/her immediately if any bleeding, stomach upset or an allergic reaction occurs.
- Topical Ointments may be of benefit.
- Pain relievers may be prescribed as necessary by your physician, usually only after surgery. Use only as directed and only as much as you need.

HEAT AND COLD:

- Cold is used to relieve pain and reduce inflammation for acute and chronic cases. Cold should be applied for 10 - 15 minutes every 2-3 hours for inflammation and pain, and immediately after any activity which aggravates your symptoms. Use ice packs or an ice massage.
- Heat may be used prior to performing stretching and strengthening activities prescribed by your physician, physical therapist or athletic trainer. Use heat pack or a warm soak.

NOTIFY OUR OFFICE IF

- Symptoms get worse or do not improve in 2-4 weeks despite treatment
- New, unexplained symptoms develop. Drugs used in treatment may produce side-effects.