



Twisted Ankle While Laying Out a Timber Harvest

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BACKGROUND

A forester, working alone, slipped and fell down a small outcropping while laying out a timber harvest. The fall was a little more than five feet and occurred after he lost his footing on loose ground. He landed and, upon feeling pain in his ankle, proceeded to limp back to his truck before assessing his injury.

OBSERVATION AND TREATMENT

Upon landing, the forester immediately knew he had injured his ankle. After resting for a moment, he stood up and determined that the foot could bear weight. He then slowly walked roughly a mile back to his truck, where he removed the boot to inspect the injury. Upon removing his boot, which had been providing both support and pressure, the ankle swelled to a point where he could not put the boot back on. Had he removed the boot in the field, he realized he would have been unable to put it back on due to swelling and may not have been able to walk out on his own power.

TREATMENT FOR SPRAINED ANKLE

Long-term treatment for a sprained ankle can vary depending on the severity of the injury. The treatment goals are to reduce pain and swelling, promote healing, and restore the function of the ankle. If at-home remedies do not sufficiently treat the injury, you should seek medical care, as the injury may be a severe sprain or a more complicated injury (e.g., a broken ankle).

For self-care of an ankle sprain, use the **R.I.C.E.** approach for the first several days:

- **Rest.** Avoid activities that cause pain, swelling, or discomfort.
- **Ice.** Use an ice pack for 15 to 20 minutes and repeat every two to three hours. If you have vascular disease, diabetes, or decreased sensation, talk with your doctor before applying ice.
- **Compression.** To help stem swelling, compress the ankle with an elastic bandage until the swelling stops. Don't hinder circulation by wrapping it too tightly.
- **Elevation.** To reduce swelling, elevate your ankle above the level of your heart, especially at night when sleeping. Gravity helps reduce swelling by draining excess fluid.



This Safety Alert analyzes an injury in accordance with the chain of events represented by the five dominoes above. Pioneer industry safety experts H.W. Heinrich and Alfred Lateiner developed this accident analysis system to provide a graphic sense of how injuries can be avoided. Their methodology has been accepted by safety professionals worldwide.

Safety Meeting Report

Topic(s) Discussed:

Comments / Recommendations:

Date:

Company:

Names of Employees Attending:

Meeting Conducted by:

Please follow equipment manufacturers' recommendations for safe operation and maintenance procedures.

signature