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Spring is sports season for many amateur athletes and weekend warriors in the Elmhurst area. It's also ankle sprain season for one area foot and ankle surgeon.

Dr. Jared Frankel, DPM, Fellow of the American College Foot and Ankle Surgeons, Board Certified by the American Board of Podiatric Surgery, and a member of The American College of Podiatric Sports Medicine in the State of Illinois, says:

"As people emerge from their winter hibernation and start to get active again, they can injure their ankles playing sports such as basketball, baseball, tennis and soccer."

Anyone who injures an ankle requires prompt medical treatment, whether it's their first sprain or their fifth. Rest, ice, compression, and elevation, (R.I.C.E.) can reduce swelling and pain until the ankle can be evaluated and treated by a foot and ankle surgeon. A sprain may not always be a sprain, the ankle could be fractured.

Dr. Frankel notes that many athletes develop chronic ankle instability from repeated ankle sprains, causing their ankle to frequently "give way". In some cases these players may require surgery. Proper rehabilitation of an ankle sprain reduces the likelihood of developing chronic ankle instability.

Dr. Frankel has been performing a new procedure for the past three years that replaces the ruptured or stretched ligaments of the ankle. It restores the stability and integrity of the ankle. The procedure shortens the recovery time getting the "weekend warrior" back in the game. In most cases there is no need for an ankle brace.

Dr. Frankel shares three spring ankle sprain prevention tips from FootPhysicians.com.

1. Perform warm-up stretches and exercises before playing sports.
2. Wear the right shoes for the sport. For example, don't wear running shoes for sports that involve a lot of side-to-side movement, such as tennis and basketball.
3. Wear an ankle brace if you're recovering from an injury or have repeatedly sprained your ankle.