

# Research links ankle injury to health problems later in life

July 12 2016, by Laura Dawahare

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Research from the University of Kentucky College of Health Sciences indicates an ankle injury might have a larger effect on long-term health.

Phillip Gribble, Ph.D., an associate professor in the Department of Rehabilitation Sciences, and his team surveyed more than 3,600 adults to ask about previous [ankle injury](#) and current [health](#) status.

They were surprised to see indications that people with injured ankles tend to have higher rates of health issues later in life.

Gribble noted that while many of those issues were intuitive, such as ankle arthritis, others were rather unexpected.

"We found higher rates of heart or respiratory ailments in people who'd injured their ankle versus those who hadn't—about 31 percent versus 24.5 percent, respectively," Gribble said.

Gribble, who cautioned that the study doesn't prove cause and effect, said the findings suggest that [ankle](#) fractures and sprains should be taken more seriously.

"It's logical to assume that [ankle sprains](#) are relatively benign injuries, but this research seems to imply that isn't so," Gribble said. "We must work on efforts to prevent the initial injury and explore ways to improve rehabilitation post-injury."

Gribble presented his findings at the annual meeting of the National Athletic Trainers' Association in Baltimore last month.

Provided by University of Kentucky

Citation: Research links ankle injury to health problems later in life (2016, July 12) retrieved 5 February 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2016-07-links-ankle-injury-health-problems.html>

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