

Kemler E, van de Port I, et al. A systematic review on the treatment of acute ankle sprain: brace versus other functional treatment types. Sports Med. 2011 ;41(3):185-97.

Design: Systematic review of clinical trials

Purpose of study: To compare the effectiveness of ankle braces versus control interventions such as compressive bandages and elastic bandages in the treatment of acute ankle sprains

Reasons not to cite as evidence:

- For the majority of comparisons of ankle braces versus compressive/elastic bandages, the authors report that there is “no evidence” for outcomes such as pain, swelling, instability, and sick leave from work
- The lack of evidence of comparative effectiveness of the braces versus other interventions is underscored by the fact that the authors used a rather lax definition of a “high quality” study, which was 4 or more points on the familiar PEDro scale; it is more common for authors of systematic reviews to set a score of 7 or greater to define a high quality of study
- The overall body of published evidence therefore appears to be insufficient to be clear about the functional advantages of ankle braces over other interventions for acute ankle sprains, which could be left to the preferences of patients and providers