



# Managing your **sports** **injury**



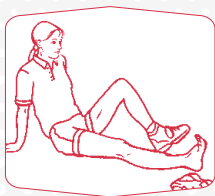
# MUSCLE STRAINS LIGAMENT SPRAINS AND BRUISES...

## Signs and Symptoms

- Pain
- Swelling
- Tenderness
- Bruising (caused by bleeding into damaged tissues)
- Limited movement
- Difficulty doing daily tasks

## What to do straight away – R.I.C.E.D.

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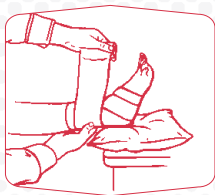
### REST

- Rest reduces further damage – stop activity as soon as your injury occurs.
- Avoid as much movement as possible to limit further injury.
- Don't put any weight on the injured part.



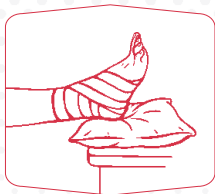
### ICE

- Ice cools the tissues and reduces pain, swelling and bleeding.
- Place ice wrapped in a damp towel onto the injured area – don't put ice directly onto bare skin.
- Hold the ice pack firmly in place with a bandage.
- Keep ice on your injury for 20 minutes every two hours for the first 48 hours.



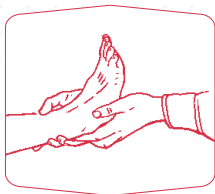
### COMPRESSION

- Firm bandaging helps to reduce the bleeding and swelling.
- Bandage your injury between ice treatments.



### ELEVATION

- Elevation helps to stop the bleeding and reduce swelling.
- Raise the injured area on a pillow for comfort and support.
- Keep the injured area raised as much as possible.



### DIAGNOSIS

- Consult your medical professional especially if you are worried about your injury, or if the pain or swelling gets worse.
- If the pain or swelling has not gone down significantly within 48 hours, also seek treatment.

## **Avoid H.A.R.M–ful factors for 72 hours after injury**

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### **HEAT**

- Heat increases bleeding at the injury site.
- Avoid hot baths and showers, saunas, hot water bottles, heat packs and liniments.

### **ALCOHOL**

- Alcohol increases bleeding and swelling at the injury site, and delays healing.
- It can also mask the pain of your injury and its possible severity, which may result in you not seeking treatment as early as you should.

### **RUNNING**

- Running, or any form of exercise, will cause further damage.
- Do not resume exercise within 72 hours of your injury unless your medical professional says it is alright to exercise.

### **MASSAGE**

- Massage causes an increase in bleeding and swelling, and should be avoided within 72 hours of the injury.
- If your injury is massaged within the first 72 hours, it may take longer to heal.

## **Consult your Medical Professional\***

- If you are worried about your injury
- If pain is excessive or gets worse
- For a rehabilitation programme specific to you and your injury

\* A medical professional, such as a doctor or physiotherapist

The most common sports injuries are:

- Muscle strains
- Ligament sprains
- Bruises

These injuries are also known as soft tissue injuries.

Taking the time to treat your injury early is important.

Proper treatment will help to relieve immediate symptoms and speed up your recovery.

## STEP 1: What can I do to get moving again?

- If the rest, ice, compression and elevation treatment is done correctly, the pain and swelling should decrease, and pain-free movements will return.
- Some gentle movement at the right time is important for healing and recovery. When the pain and swelling have reduced, you should start some gentle exercise.
- When you start exercising again, keep all movements within the limits of pain and never force any movement.

**If the pain or swelling return, consult your medical professional.**

## STEP 2: When can I get back to play?

- Before you return to play, you need to make sure you can do the specific tasks your sport requires, such as jumping, throwing or kicking.
- Once you are able to perform these skills to the same level as before the injury, you are ready to return to play.
- Do not return to play until you are fully recovered from your injury. Returning to play too soon can make your injury worse and delay full recovery.

### WANT TO KNOW MORE?

For more information on how to manage some common sports injuries, and for sports injury prevention information, visit the ACC SportSmart website: [www.acc.co.nz/sportsmart](http://www.acc.co.nz/sportsmart)

For additional free copies of this brochure, phone 0800 THINKSAFE (0800 844 657).