

R.I.C.E. is an easy abbreviation which explains the treatment steps for an acute injury. For injuries such as mild sprains, strains, and overuse, the RICE method is helpful for the first 48 to 72 hours after the injury.

REST



Stop the activity. Give the injured area time to recover. Rest the injured area as much as possible. This will protect against further injury taking place. Reduce your daily activities and stop your regular exercises for 48-72 hours.

ICE

Ice should be applied to the injured area during the first 72 hours. Heat should not be applied to an acute injury. Heat will cause more swelling.

Ice should be applied for 20-30 minutes.

Less than 20 minutes and the effectiveness of the ice will be decreased. If ice is applied for more than 30 minutes, it will begin to have the same effect as heat. Do not re-apply the ice for 1-2 hours. It is recommended that ice be applied several times a day, to bring down swelling.

You can make an easy ice pack by filling a zip lock plastic bag with ice and then apply it to the injured area. A bag of frozen vegetables wrapped in a towel can be used.

OR—

You may fill a small paper cup with water and freeze in until it is solid. Then tear part of the cup away and rub the injured area with the ice 20-30 minutes as recommended by the doctor.



COMPRESSION

When an injury occurs, bleeding and fluid causes swelling.

An elastic wrap Bandage will help reduce this swelling by not allowing expansion to occur.



When applying an elastic wrap, always wrap toward the heart. Firmly bandage the area, but not too tight—this could cut off blood circulation to the area.



Loosen the wrap if fingers or toes become cold and begin to feel numb.

With any injury, if there is any indication that it is a broken bone or a serious joint injury, call 911 (or on campus by cell phone, you can use 574-631-5555).

During the academic year, X-Ray service is available at the Univ. Health Services Mon-Fri. 10:30 am - 4:00 pm

ELEVATION



***“RAISE YOUR
HAND,
PLEASE.”***

Often edema is present after injuries. Injured extremities should be elevated (raised) above the level of the heart to counteract the effects of gravity and the pooling of blood. It is often difficult to raise your arm or leg Above the heart but when you are sitting try to elevate your injured extremity.



SUGGESTION

You may be anxious to have your injury heal so you can return to your sport, work, and daily routines. But rushing your recovery can put you at risk for future injury



When to Seek Professional Help

Following an injury, you may follow self-care methods to help your recovery. Seek professional help if you experience any of the following:

- When R.I.C.E. therapy or other self-care methods do not reduce swelling or pain after 48 hours.
- Severe pain is present.
- You are unable to put any weight on the injured area.
- The area over the injured joint or near to it, is tender when touched.
- The injured area has lumps and bumps.
- You cannot move the injured joint.
- Numbness is present in any part of the injured area.
- Redness or red streaks spread out from the injury.
- You injure an area that has been injured several times before.
- You have a fever and the injured area appears swollen and warm.

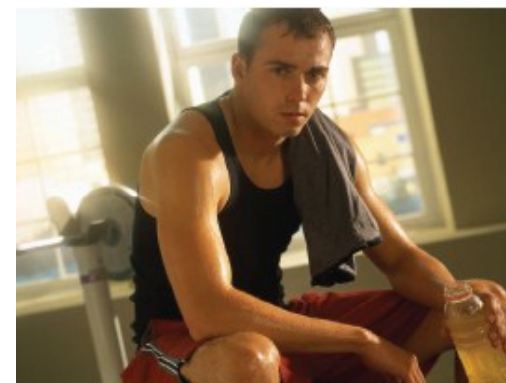
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UNIVERSITY HEALTH SERVICES
SAINT LIAM HALL
574-631-7497



Available 24/7 during the Academic Year

Rest
Ice
Compression
Elevation



“...Prompt treatment of acute injuries can decrease the pain and the swelling and shorten your recovery time.”

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