

Injury Care sheet 1: **STOP!** **Follow RICE!**

Rest and good recovery now is imperative

You have experienced some kind of trauma to a muscle, ligament or tendon. Movement is painful and limited and there may be some inflammation or bruising around the injury site.

What you need to do: *Follow RICE*

Rest -This is vital at this stage. Any attempt to continue activity may prolong your recovery period and reduce the quality of healing. Immediate rest from movement and load bearing enables damaged areas to knit together quickly before any more damage is done. Avoid 'testing' to see if it still hurts!

Ice - Apply ice (A bag of peas covered with a tea towel will do) onto the injury site until the skin pales to white (approx. 5min). Remove and allow circulation to return before re-applying. Continue this process (10 -15min at a time) throughout the day or whenever possible. Don't ice until skin is pink as this is too much and may be detrimental to the healing process. **Avoid:** placing ice in direct contact with skin (this can burn) or the use of deep heat/freeze gels (these do not achieve the same effect as ice treatment). Please note that heat treatment at this stage may worsen inflammatory effects.

Compression -Should be applied ASAP to restrict bleeding at the injury site. Apply pressure by using a firm pad over the injury site with strapping around it to hold it in place. (do not compress around a whole limb, as this will starve other areas of blood).

Elevation -This assists removal of swelling and wastes and should be practiced as much as possible. Raise the injured limb higher than the level of the torso in a comfortably supported position (waste drainage occurs just beneath your collar bone).

What your sports massage therapist will do:

Therapy will be minimal and mostly involve icing and gentle massage away from the injury site to increase drainage of wastes and swelling.

Injury Care sheet 2: **Prepare to rehabilitate** **follow MICE!**

begin mobilisations, don't push it!

You have followed RICE and your injury has become less inflamed and less painful. You are now ready to introduce some basic movements and receive more thorough massage techniques.

What you need to do: *Follow MICE!*

Mobilisation- 'active rest'. You can now begin to use your own strength to take the injured area through its full **pain free** range of motion (without any weight or resistance). Slowly begin to increase this range but **stay within your pain tolerance**. Gentle mobilisation at this time is the first step to rehabilitation but be careful not to over do it. consult your therapist before beginning mobilising exercises. **Continue with regular Ice, Compression and elevation.**

Ice - This is of great benefit after performing mobilising exercises. Apply ice (A bag of peas covered with a tea towel will do) onto the injury site until the skin pales to white (approx. 5min). Remove and allow circulation to return before re-applying. Continue this process (10 -15min at a time) throughout the day when possible or after each mobilising exercise. Try not to ice until skin is pink as this is too much and may be detrimental to the healing process. **Avoid:** placing ice in direct contact with skin (this can burn) or the use of deep heat/freeze gels (these do not achieve the same effect as ice treatment). Please note that heat treatment at this stage may worsen inflammatory effects.

Compression - Begin using a support bandage rather than strapping and pads. specific taping and strapping techniques will allow activity to resume while offering protection to damaged tissues.

Elevation - Continue as often as possible until all swelling has gone.

What your sports massage therapist will do:

Your therapy will now focus on removing any build up of scar tissues and adhesion while re-lengthening and relaxing the muscles. Frictions into scar tissues shouldn't go beyond pain scale 5-6 (10 being most painful). Your therapist may now begin to investigate other areas that may be compensating for the injured area and becoming overused.

Injury Care sheet 3: Rehabilitation starts

*Begin mobilisations with greater resistance and speed
Enjoy deeper more vigorous massage*

You're ready to begin stretching and re-strengthening the injured area. Take your time as the area may still be prone to re-injury. Too many people resume full activity too soon, It can take up to two months of rehabilitation before you're ready to enter a competitive situation again. Remember re-injury is worse.

What you need to do:

GENTLE RESISTANCE EXERCISE: Begin to perform mobilising exercises against a resistance (your therapist will advise the best resistance to use), slowly increasing repetitions or speed as your rehabilitation progresses. Your therapist will guide you through the best exercises for you and assist you in developing beneficial stretches both for the injured area and for any areas that may have become tight and overused through compensation.

HOT/COLD TREATMENT: You may now like to begin using heat treatment as well as regular icing (*do not use heat treatment if any inflammation is still present*). This will help to bring circulation back into the injured area allowing blood to deliver vital nutrients for tissue repair. This process should involve the application of a heat pad (*wheat bags are excellent*) for 90 seconds followed by ice for 90 seconds over a period of 10-15 min. It is best advised to end this exercise with ice.

What your sports massage therapist will do:

Massage will now become more focused on the precise area of injury, the intention being to break down any excessive formation of scar tissue, break adhesion between the muscles (gluing together caused by waste fluids) and clear waste material out of the muscles. Some techniques may be uncomfortable but pain will not exceed between 6-7 pain scale (*10 being the most painful*). There should be no sudden sharp pain. Massage will relax and relengthen the muscles and counteract any overuse symptoms occurring in other areas of the body that may have been working extra hard to compensate for the injured area. Massage may also help to restore nerve innervation to the injury site and increase body awareness of the entire area.

Ice treatment

Essential throughout the recovery period whenever inflammation is present and particularly important during the acute stage of injury.

Ice treatment aids in the clearance of inflammation, reduces pain and may help the acceleration of the healing process, especially if applied as early as possible after sustaining an injury, and combined with compression and elevation of the affected area.

As part of your remedial massage therapy your therapist may recommend the application of ice after sessions where deep friction methods have been used on problem areas within the tissues.

Method :

Purpose made Ice packs can be bought from many high street chemists or online (Your therapist can also provide you with an ice pack if requested). Otherwise a bag of peas covered with a tea towel will do.

Apply the ice pack onto the injury site until the skin pales to white (approx. 5min-10min depending on the area concerned). Joint areas and smaller more superficial muscle groups (wrists/ankles) may require less ice time than the large muscle groups such as the muscles of the thigh.

Remove and allow circulation and colour to return before re-applying. Continue this process (10 -15min at a time) throughout the day or whenever possible after gentle mobilisation exercises. Don't ice until skin is pink as this is too much and may be detrimental to the healing process.

Avoid: placing ice in direct contact with skin (this can burn) or the use of deep heat/freeze gels (these do not achieve the same effect as ice treatment). Please note that heat treatment in the early stages of injury rehabilitation may worsen inflammatory effects and be detrimental to recovery.