

RICER: first aid for sprains, strains and fractures



Injuries such as sprains, strains and fractures can happen easily. They often occur after accidents or falls, or during sport or other physical activities.



When an injury occurs, some internal bleeding and swelling can develop in the injured area. Too much swelling can cause extra damage.

R - Rest
I - Ice
C - Compression
E - Elevation
R - Referral

RICER is a first aid technique used in the first 48 hours after a sprain, strain or fracture. It can limit swelling and help speed up recovery.



R - Rest

After injury, stop your child taking part in any painful activity. Moving the injured part can increase bleeding and swelling, slowing down the healing process. **Don't let your child keep playing.**



I - Ice

Use an ice pack to reduce pain and swelling in the affected area. Apply ice for 15 minutes every two hours for 24 hours, then for 15 minutes every four hours for 24 hours.



C - Compression

Bandage the area firmly (but not too tightly), starting just below the injured area and moving up towards your child's torso. Overlap each layer by half. Finish bandaging about one hand's width above the injured area.



E - Elevation

Keep the injured area elevated - this limits blood flow and minimises swelling. Keep legs above your child's hip bones by putting the leg on a chair, pillow or stool. Use a sling for arm injuries.



R - Referral

Have the injury checked by a doctor. The doctor might request X-rays, ultrasounds or CT scans to diagnose the problem and create a treatment plan.



In the first 48 hours after an injury, **don't use treatments** such as heat or hot rubs. Also avoid moderate or intense activity, and massage.