



Sprains, strains, and injuries: the RICE fix

Whether you're headed off the trail or staying on track, kicking a ball or throwing one, you'll likely need to know about the RICE fix when you sprain, strain, or injure something.

Dr. William Levine, chief of sports medicine at NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital/Columbia University Medical Center, recommends RICE, a first-aid technique that can be applied to most sprains, strains and joint injuries.

- **Rest:** If you are injured during any activity, stop the activity immediately and rest the injured area. Do not try to work through the pain.
- **Ice:** For the first 24 to 48 hours, apply ice packs to the injured area every 2 hours for 15 minutes. Make sure that the ice (a handy bag of frozen peas works well) is not in direct contact with the skin; a cotton handkerchief covering is helpful.
- **Compress:** Bandage the area firmly, extending the wrapping above and below the injury. This pressure will stop any bleeding and reduce any swelling of the injured area.
- **Elevate:** Whenever possible, elevate the injured area above the level of your heart. Elevation and compression are typically used for acute injuries such as a twisted ankle.