

Sprains & Strains

Caution

There can be confusion when identifying the difference between a sprain or strain and a fracture. As a general rule, a sprain is the over extension of a joint which stretches ligaments. A strain is an injury to a tendon or muscle.

Also as a general rule, if the application of ice to the injured area causes more pain, it is possible there is a fracture and treat it as such.

Signs and Symptoms

- Intense sudden pain in the joint
- Loss of power to the joint
- Inability to weight bear
- Tender to touch
- Rapid Swelling
- Bleeding internally (Bruising)

Treatment

- Adhere to DRSABCD
- The first aid management for a Soft Tissue Injury is R.I.C.E. Rest, Ice, Compression and Elevation.

R – REST

Rest the patient

I – ICE

Ice the injured area for 20 minutes every hour for the first 24 hours, then for 20 minutes every 4 hours up until 72 hours has elapsed. Do not apply directly onto the skin, first apply compression to the joint then apply ice.

C – COMPRESSION

A compression roller bandage should be firmly applied to the injury to reduce further swelling.

E – ELEVATION

Elevate the injury.

- No H.A.R.M. protocols should also be adhered to within the first 72 hours preceding the injury. This is done to reduce the flow of blood and swelling to the injured area, thus making the recovery process longer.

H – NO HEAT

A – NO ALCOHOL

R – NO RUNNING OR EXERCISE

M – NO MASSAGE TO THE AFFECTED AREA.

