



## R.I.C.E.

When an injury is minor, like a muscle strain or ligament sprain, it can be treated with R.I.C.E. R.I.C.E. stands for Rest, Ice, Compression, and Elevation. It is used to help control the swelling that accumulates around the injury. In turn, swelling can decrease the motion of an injured joint and increase the pain of the injury.

### Rest

Rest is necessary for the injury to heal. Limit activity to the injured area and try to rest it for 2-3 days. Using it too soon can increase the swelling to the area.

### Ice

Ice is used to help control swelling, bleeding, spasm, inflammation, and pain. Swelling causes tissue damage by not allowing oxygen to get to the surrounding tissues. Ice constricts the blood vessels, and, in turn, minimizes the swelling and damage.

Ice should be applied to the injured site immediately and for the first 48-72 hours. Three to four daily treatments of ice for 10 minutes on fingers, toes, and the face, and 20 minutes for larger areas. If the injury is more severe, ice can be applied every 1½ to 2 hours.

### Compression

Compression helps limit swelling to the affected area and spaces surrounding the area. An elastic bandage, or ACE® wrap, can be used. The wrap should be firm, but not too tight. If numbness, tingling, increased pain, coolness, and/or swelling occurs, the wrap is too tight. Re-wrap the area every 3-4 hours because the bandage will loosen. Do NOT sleep with the bandage on.

### Elevation

Elevation helps slow bleeding and swelling. It also prevents fluids from pooling and returns blood from the affected area back to the heart. The body part should be placed above the heart when at rest, sitting, lying down, and sleeping.