

P-R-I-C-E

This simple protocol, if used quickly, can help to minimize the immediate effects of injury such as swelling, pain and loss of functional movement prior to seeing a medical practitioner or sports medicine professional.

P is for Protection

Ensure you protect yourself from further damage by stopping exercising and where available use splints or crutches to take the weight off the injured area.

R is for Rest

In the acute stages (generally up to 48-72hrs) resting is essential to allow the injury to heal. Soldiering on and trying to 'run through' an injury can often make things worse and delay healing.

I is for Ice

Pain and inflammation can be significantly reduced by the use of ice. Ice packs, frozen peas, ice cubes can all be used.

Ice MUST be wrapped (ie. tea towel) before contact with the skin

Apply for approx 10 mins every 2 hours (do NOT ice for more than 20 mins) Ice should not be applied over an area of numbness or open wound.

Stop applying ice if there are any negative effects such as increase in pain or swelling or skin soreness.

C is for Compression

Compression of the swollen area using stretchy bandage will help to reduce the swelling and control the spread into uninjured areas.

It is important NOT to use rigid tape until the swelling has plateaued as the lack of 'give' in the tape could potentially compromise blood flow to and from the injury site.

E is for Elevation

Elevating the injury to above the heart reduces the flow of blood to the area and reduces the swelling. You can do this in conjunction with icing and compression.

HEAT OR COLD?

Heat is comforting and can help relieve muscle spasm and joint stiffness, if your pain is not caused by a recent injury you may find heat beneficial. Heat increases blood flow and therefore is not suitable for acute injuries where there is inflammation.

Cold is good for reducing pain and inflammation in recent/acute injuries by reducing the ability of some of the pain nerves to carry the pain message to the brain and can also be useful in chronic (long term) inflammation.

Who does what?

Sports Massage

Sports massage therapists utilize hands on massage techniques to treat the soft tissues of the body. These techniques help prepare an athlete for competition, enhance performance, help recovery after exercise or competition, reduce the likelihood of injury and to assist in the recovery from sports-related or non-sport related musculoskeletal injuries.

Sports Therapy

Sports Therapists specialise in the musculoskeletal systems of the body. They use advanced hands on techniques to treat and rehabilitate soft tissues injuries. In addition to the skills of a massage therapist, sports therapists carry out a full assessment to understand the route cause of injuries and implement appropriate rehabilitation exercise and stretching programmes to aid recovery. They utilise various techniques to optimise performance, preparation and reduce the likelihood of injury. The name can be confusing as they are trained to treat all kinds of musculoskeletal pain or injury and to improve posture and flexibility regardless of whether the client takes part in sport.

Physiotherapy

Physiotherapists help people affected by injury, illness or disability through movement and exercise, manual therapy, education and advice. They work in a variety of specialisms in health and social care, using their knowledge and skills to improve a range of conditions associated with different systems of the body, such as; Neurological (stroke, multiple sclerosis, Parkinson's); Neuromusculoskeletal (back pain, whiplash, sports injuries, arthritis); Cardiovascular (chronic heart disease, rehabilitation after heart attack); Respiratory (asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, cystic fibrosis).

Osteopathy

Osteopaths are experts in the diagnosis, treatment, prevention and rehabilitation of musculoskeletal disorders, and the effects of these conditions on patients' general health. Osteopaths seek to restore the optimal functioning of the body, where possible without the use of drugs or surgery. Manipulation, articulation and soft tissue techniques are widely used. Certain osteopaths are also trained to use cranial, visceral and functional techniques which are subtle and highly effective and many are equipped to offer nutrition, exercise and lifestyle advice.

Podiatry

Podiatrists are health professionals who have been trained to prevent, diagnose, treat and rehabilitate abnormal conditions of the feet, ankles and lower limbs. They also prevent and correct deformity, relieve pain and treat infections.