

First aid - Sprains & strains

1. Provide safety

Commence the basic first aid protocol, ensuring safety for both the casualty and rescuers. Arrange for further medical assistance if required.

2. Look for:

- Pain and tenderness around joints or muscles
- Swelling
- Discolouration to injured part
- Decreased function of the injured part
- Inability to apply pressure to injured part without pain



3. RICE

Rest

Stop movement of the casualty. If the casualty is playing sport, take him/her to the sideline or first aid room and immediately make the casualty lie still.

Ice

Ice stands for the cold application of water, ice or cold pack. It is not the ice that reduces the swelling, but the application of a cold treatment regime such as cold water. The cold compression bandage assists healing by reducing bleeding into the tissue and reduces pain and swelling. To avoid cold injury and frostbite, do not apply ice directly to the skin and do not apply it for more than 20 minutes.

Compression

A roller compression bandage is now required. Often if you soak the compression bandage (crepe bandage) in cold water first, it aids the healing process as it immediately reduces blood flow into the bruise.

Elevation

Elevate (raise) the injured area if injuries permit.



Things to remember...

RICE = Rest
Ice
Compression
Elevation