



9910 W Loop 1604 N #124
San Antonio, TX 78254

Phone (210) 692-0358
Fax (210) 692-0359

Aftercare of Sprains and Strains: R.I.C.E.

1. **R**est

- limit activities that are painful
- immobilization (Ace wrap, splint, etc.)
- relief of load bearing (crutches, etc.)

2. **I**ce

- limits swelling
- relieves pain / muscle spasms
- apply over covered skin (ace bandage, towel, sock) for 15-20 minutes
- may use immersion in ice bath for finger sprains
- 3-4 times per day for first few days after injury
- continue as long as swelling and pain persist

3. **C**ompression

Use compression when elevating a sprain or strain in early treatment. Using an Ace bandage, wrap the area overlapping the elastic wrap by one-half of the width of the wrap. The wrap should be snug, but not cutting off circulation to the extremity. So, if your fingers or toes become cold, blue, or tingle, re-wrap.

4. **E**levation

- limits swelling
- try to get it higher than your heart if possible
- elevate at night by placing pillows under your arm or leg

In addition:

Heat may be added a few days after injury to increase circulation and improve stiffness. Using contrast (alternating ice then heat, ice then heat) may help improve stiffness. Early, active range of motion exercises should begin a few days after the injury to improve stiffness and maintain function. Ibuprofen can be administered 3-4 times per day at appropriate doses, as directed by your physician, for relief of pain and to decrease inflammation.