



What To Do After An Injury

The following advice applies to those injured during sport on a weekend. Use this as a guide for the first 2 days with the intent to see a Physiotherapist early in the week to gain a diagnosis and further advice.

When To Go To Hospital

- If you have had joint dislocation or obvious fracture
- If you have significant pain and swelling, especially around a joint that stops you from sleeping that simple pain medication does not change
- If you have any shortness of breath after a significant knock to your chest
- If you start to pass blood in your urine after a knock to your back
- If you develop any visual problems, nausea, vomiting or significant headache after a head knock

Recommendations For The First 2 Days Post Injury

REST — The most important thing to do is rest the injured area. If you cannot walk without a limp get crutches to unload. If it hurts to move your arm get a sling to let it rest. The more you can unload the injured region in the first 2 days the better it will settle down. Simple pain relief, such as paracetamol, can help with rest by allowing you to sleep with comfort. Do not take any oral medication if you are thinking of going to hospital.

ICE — Ice is great for pain relief early but there concerns that it may stop some of the healing cells getting to the injured area. You are safe to use ice initially for 10-15 minutes post injury. If you are getting significant pain, throbbing and swelling around the injury site in the following 24 hours you can use it like simple pain relief by applying for 10-15 minutes, 1-2 times a day.

COMPRESSION — Early compression is one of the best ways to reduce swelling and maintain good muscle activity around the injury. Compression tights or tops are a good option. If you don't have access to these then use a simple tubular bandage or elastic bandage around the injured area and 5 – 10 cm either side.

ELEVATION — This can help reduce swelling around the injured tissue. Aim to get the injured area above the level of the heart. For the leg, lie flat with 1-2 pillows under your leg to lift it up. For the arm lie flat with 1-2 pillows resting under your arm, or lie on you unaffected side with 1-2 pillows between your chest and arm.

REFERRAL — **Call the Physio first thing Monday morning** - This is the most important step so your injury can be properly assessed and managed. We can let you know if you require any imaging such as an X-ray, can supply and fit braces, moonboots, crutches or slings and hire out the game ready machine to reduce swelling if required. We can refer you to the pharmacist or sports doctors if you require any medication or specialist advice. You'll get an idea of how long the injury might take to get better and we will communicate and work with your coaches to start some rehab and cross training.

Things To Avoid

Alcohol — Avoid drinking alcohol for at least 2 days after injury. Alcohol opens up your blood vessels and will cause more bleeding and swelling around the injury which will increase pain and may delay healing.

Anti-inflammatory medication such as neurofen or voltaren can slow down the healing cells reaching the injured tissue which may delay healing. Some injuries benefit from this medication but not often in the first 2 days.

This is a very general guide for *the first 2 days* after an injury. Please ensure you get assessed by a Physiotherapist early during the following week to ensure your injury is managed correctly.