

Physiotherapy

SPORT IS A VITAL PART OF THE AUSTRALIAN LIFESTYLE – IT PROMOTES GOOD HEALTH, STRESS RELIEF AND IS FUN. SOMETIMES INJURIES MAY OCCUR THROUGH SPORT, BUT FORTUNATELY MOST INJURIES CAN BE EFFECTIVELY TREATED, MANAGED AND EVEN PREVENTED BY YOUR PHYSIOTHERAPIST.



COMMON INJURIES

- Bruises.
- Ligament sprains.
- Joint injuries.
- Over-use injuries.

WHAT GOES WRONG

Most sporting injuries are a result of a direct blow (bruise or contusion) or an indirect force like a twist (sprains, strains, tears). Some injuries are due to over-use stresses (tendinitis, stress fractures).

HOW CAN YOU MINIMISE INJURY?

- Correct warm up and warm down procedures.
- Protective strapping or bracing.
- Correct footwear and sporting equipment.
- Specific conditioning for your particular sport.
- Good aerobic fitness.
- Appropriate rehabilitation.

GETTING BACK INTO ACTION

Physiotherapy treatment will enable you to return safely to your sporting activity more quickly than just 'rest and see what happens'.

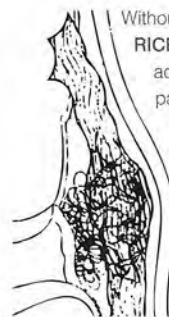
Before you can safely return to your sport it is essential to regain strength, mobility, balance and co-ordination. Your physiotherapist will assess these areas and show you how to improve them.



Ligament immediately after injury.



With early physiotherapy and RICE, scar tissue is healthy and recovery is quicker.



Without physiotherapy and RICE, and with too much activity too soon, bulky painful scar tissue and delayed recovery may result.

HOW PHYSIOTHERAPY CAN HELP

Physiotherapists are highly qualified and trained in the assessment and treatment of sports injuries. As they have comprehensive knowledge of biomechanics, tissue injury and healing, many physiotherapists are appointed to sports teams to monitor the rehabilitation of injured players and assist with preventing injuries.

WHAT SHOULD I DO AFTER AN INJURY?

As soon as possible, and for 72 hours after injury, use the **RICE** method:

- Rest** Take it easy and only move within your limit of pain.
- Ice** As soon as possible, and for 20 minutes every two hours, apply ice or a frozen gelpack wrapped in a damp towel. This helps to control bleeding and pain and reduces secondary tissue damage.
- Compression** Firmly bandage the injury. This helps to control swelling.
- Elevation** As much as possible, elevate your injury higher than the level of your heart to reduce swelling.

See your local physiotherapist especially if there is pain and swelling after 24 hours (no referral is needed).

REHABILITATE

Physiotherapy can help reduce the time that your injury is painful and movement is restricted, so that you can safely return to sport faster.

Avoid any of the **HARM** factors in the first 48 hours to prevent increased swelling and help your recovery:

- Heat.
- Alcohol.
- Running.
- Massage.

GENERAL

Many physiotherapists in private practice are listed in the Yellow Pages. Physiotherapists also work in public hospitals and community health centres. Check to see if a physiotherapist is a member of the APA. Members of the APA are bound by a professional Code of Ethics and have access to extensive and continuing postgraduate education programmes. Some APA members have postgraduate qualifications and extensive experience in the management of sports injuries and are awarded the title APA Sports Physiotherapist.

HEALTH REBATES

You may consult a physiotherapist either directly or by referral from your medical practitioner. Most private health insurance funds offer rebates for physiotherapy treatment.



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