



## What do I do with My Injured Body?

**After a muscle or joint injury the RICER protocol must apply for the next three to four days.**

- **Rest**
- **Ice:** 15 minutes on/15 minutes off, at least for the first 24 hours. Then icing frequency can reduce to 15 minutes every two hours for days two and three
- **Compression:** with a firm bandage; keep the injured area wrapped in a firm bandage, be aware not to affect circulation
- **Elevation:** above the level of your body, until swelling subsides
- **Referral:** to Southside Physiotherapy or your GP for assessment and advice



The **No HARM** protocol must be applied for two-three days following a muscle or joint injury. This will help to facilitate swelling reduction, reduced bleeding and promote quality repair (less adhesions, scar and fibrous tissue) and regeneration.

- **No Heat:** as heat can cause increased swelling and bleeding.
- **No Alcohol:** causes increased capillary bleeding.
- **No Running/Activity:** can cause re injury. The old adage “run it out” does not apply.
- **No Massage:** This can cause disruption to the repair process and further bleeding.

### ***Professional management for these injuries must be obtained***

**There are FIVE main steps for complete recovery from injury:**

- 1) **Commence** immediate management of the injury (as above)
- 2) **Promote** quality healing: while relieving pain, bruising and swelling, ensure scarring and adhesions are minimized
- 3) **Commence** rehabilitation immediately by doing basic exercises for:
  - **restoring** joint range of movement, strength, coordination and flexibility
  - **progress** as recovery occurs
- 4) **Advice** given for a graduated return to training and then sport
- 5) **Appropriate** bracing/strapping may need to be applied initially to protect the injury

***Getting better is not just getting rid of pain and swelling, because the absence of pain and swelling does not indicate a full recovery during the recovery process.***

***Muscles weaken and shrink, joints become stiff, neuromuscular co-ordination is lost and flexibility is reduced.***

***Complete restoration of these losses is necessary for a safe and permanent return to sport.***

**Please note: this information should serve as a guide only. When in doubt always seek advice from Southside Physiotherapy & Sports Injury Centre or your GP.**