

Make Your Move

For exercise injuries, have some R.I.C.E.



When spelled in lowercase letters, “rice” is a healthy complex carbohydrate. However, R.I.C.E., which stands for rest, ice, compression and elevation, is an easy way to remember the actions to take in treating those sprains, strains, muscle pulls and bruises that sometimes happen during exercise, no matter how careful we are.

The purpose of R.I.C.E. is to reduce swelling caused by blood flow and fluid accumulation in the injured area. Here are the actions the acronym reminds you to take.

Rest

- As soon as you experience pain, immediately stop your activity.
- Immobilize the injured area as much as possible over the next few days to allow it to heal quicker.

Ice

- Applying cold compresses to soft-tissue injuries reduces bleeding or swelling.
- Wrap ice or compresses in an absorbent towel or cloth to avoid frostbite.
- Apply for ice 10 minutes, then remove for 10 minutes.
- Maintain this regimen for 24 hours, or until pain and swelling subside.

Compression

- Compression, or pressure, helps reduce swelling and painful blood flow to the area.
- Apply pressure by wrapping the injury with an elastic bandage or by taping.
- Pressure bandages should be tight, but not so tight as to cut off blood flow completely.
- Loosen bandages or tape if your toes or fingers begin to feel numb or look discolored.
- Always use a cold compress along with compression.

Elevation

- Keep the injured area above heart level as much as possible to reduce internal bleeding and the pooling of blood in the area.
- Elevation also reduces pain and throbbing.