Acute Injury Treatment

The care for an acute, or new, injury is the same for all sprains, strains, and contusions (bruises). Follow the P.R.I.C.E acronym for safe treatment of your child’s injury.

**P** = Protection—if needed, protect the area with a splint, crutches, etc.

**R** = Rest—discontinue activity so the healing process can begin (can be 1 to 10 days)

**I** = Ice—apply ice to the injured area for 20 minutes, 3-4 times per day (NO HEAT for the first 72 hours)

**C** = Compression—apply an elastic wrap (“ace wrap”) to the injured area during the day (helps control swelling); remove before bedtime

**E** = Elevation—keep the injured area elevated to the level of the heart, whenever possible (controls swelling)

**Helpful hints:**

- Real ice can be applied directly to the skin via a plastic bag—chemical ice packs should be placed over a towel first and NOT directly on the skin
- Injuries to the toes, foot, or ankle can benefit from an “ice bath” (bucket filled with ice and water)—temperature should NOT go below 55°F
- If a more serious injury is suspected, please refer to your PCP or orthopedic doctor immediately

*All injuries MUST be reported to your school’s certified athletic trainer immediately. Your athletic trainer and doctor will consult on return-to-play decisions.*