



Injuries

Q1. After an injury during a game or training, what are the best things I can do to help reduce damage and speed recovery when I get home?

- Goals of initial injury management should comprise control of pain, reduction of swelling and redness allowing optimum healing and facilitating patient rehabilitation.
- The 'gold standard' of initial treatment of sports injuries follows the acronym RICE (rest, ice, compression, elevation).
- Rest – complete rest for an extended period of time is not indicated in many injuries. Relative rest and not complete rest of the injured part is indicated to help the healing process.
- Ice – See Q2
- Compression – Use compression bandages to decrease swelling (Usually for first 48-72hrs during inflammatory phase but is dependent on severity of injury). Use both during and after ice application.
- Elevation – Wherever possible keep the injured part elevated on a pillow, above the level of the heart (Usually for first 48-72hrs during inflammatory phase but is dependent on severity of injury).

Q2. I hear bits about ice and rest etc, but how long after the injury, for how long each time and how frequently do I ice?

Ice application should be continued during the first 24-72hrs, or until swelling and bruising have stopped, whichever is longer. Ice application for 20mins every 2hrs is a good guide to follow.

Q3. I have also heard that after a certain amount of time / days icing my injury, I should apply heat. Again if true, how long after the injury, for how long and how frequently do I apply heat?

Heat application may play a useful part in the management of injured tissue beyond 72hrs or after swelling and bruising have stopped, whichever is longer. Application for 20mins at a time is a general guide.

Q4. To strap or not to strap.

My ankle / knee feel's fine after a knock or twist several weeks ago, but I can still feel a slight twinge. It doesn't impede my playing, should I support the ankle / knee with a bandage / support bandage of some sort?

An injury must be fully evaluated to determine the pathology and severity of injury before any application of tape or wrap. Although the use of tape or wraps may allow the individual to resume early activity, their use should never take the place of a comprehensive rehabilitation programme. It is also important to note that when improperly or poorly aligned, a taping or wrapping technique can lead to an increased risk of injury to the region.

Q5. Do I treat groin injuries in the same way as other lower limb injuries?

Yes, although it is important to note that groin pain can be caused by a variety of factors, so a thorough assessment may be required. Normal RICE protocol should be followed for the first 72hrs followed by gentle stretching and progressive strengthening exercises.



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Nutrition

Q1. Assuming we kick off at 2pm, and are playing away, so meet at our ground before travel at 11.45. What and when should I eat?

There is no magic food or meal, which, if indigested prior to competition, will ensure success. Energy utilised during training or competition comes predominantly from foods consumed in the days prior to the event. Although the pre-match meal should be light and easily digested, it should be satisfying to prevent the onset of hunger and weakness during the match. It is recommended that food be consumed at least 2-3hrs prior to competition.

Q2. Same as above but home game so meeting at 12.30?

See Q1.

Q3. I keep hearing about carbohydrates in the build up to a game, what about after a game?

To replenish glycogen stores, following depletion by strenuous exercise, athletes should intake carbohydrates within 3 hours after exercise. In the short term, the sooner the carbohydrate is ingested after exercise, the more effective is the replenishment of glycogen stores.

Q4. As a footballer, what should my diet consist of? Surely it's not just carbohydrates?

Diet is dependent upon the individual. However, a general guide is 60-70% Carbohydrates, 12-15% Protein, 15-30% Fat.

Carbohydrates – Bread, Pasta, Cereal, Rice, Potatoes etc.

Protein – Meat, Poultry, Fish etc

Fat – Butter, Cheese, Eggs etc.

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BSc (Hons) Sports Therapy

- Recognition, evaluation, and assessment of injury
- Management, treatment, and referral of a wide range of injuries
- Rehabilitation within all stages of injury
- Soft tissue massage/Sports massage
- Prevention of injury
- Exercise education



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