

ANKLE INJURY REHABILITATION

Please consult your physician or athletic trainer before attempting any rehabilitation exercises. Your child's injury may be too severe to undertake these exercises and it is always best to err on the side of caution.

R.I.C.E.

RICE is the common method used by athletic trainers, coaches, and parents everywhere to quickly treat mild injuries. Follow the RICE protocol below to treat mild injuries if you've decided to not immediately see a medical professional.

Rest – Decrease your activity so your ankle has time to start healing.

Ice – You can apply ice to your injured ankle in the following ways:

- Ice in a plastic bag (Apply to the ankle for 20-25 minutes)
- Ice made in a paper cup (Apply to the ankle for 8-10 minutes and rip off the top of the paper cup as the ice melts)
- Immersion in ice water (5-10 minutes)

You should ice your ankle many times a day with at least 30 minutes between each ice application.

Compression – Compression helps to reduce swelling, so tightly wrap an elastic bandage around the ankle and loosen the wrap if it becomes uncomfortable.

Elevation – Elevate the ankle above the level of your heart to reduce blood flow to the area and help alleviate increased swelling.



REHABILITATION

Before following this rehabilitation protocol you must consult with your physician. You or your child's injury may be too severe to undertake the exercises outlined in this guide.

The following are non-weight-bearing movements in which you should ice before and after the exercises. You may start these exercises soon after an injury occurs although this may result in experiencing some soreness. If your child has more than mild discomfort, please discontinue the activity or reduce the intensity level until the pain lessens. The ankle should be exercised 3-4 times a day making sure to take lengthy breaks in between exercises.



Range of Motion – While you are sitting down, bring your toes up as far as possible then point them down as far as possible. Rotate your ankle inward as far as possible the outward as far as possible. Perform for one minute.



Ankle Stretching – Loop a towel around your foot and pull toward you. Hold that stretch for 15 seconds then release. Perform the stretch five times. Reduce the intensity if discomfort is noted.



Towel Sweep – Place a towel on a smooth floor. While sitting in a chair with your ankle placed over the towel, sweep your ankle inward, sliding the towel toward your opposite foot. Then sweep the towel in the opposite direction. You can add weight to the end of the towel to increase the intensity and strengthen your ankle. Perform for 1-2 minutes.

Weight Bearing Exercises – Ice before and after these exercises. Perform these exercises while standing (weight bearing) and without pain. Progress only if there is no pain. All exercises should be done on a flat surface – an indoor large room or hallway works best.

1. Walk in small steps
2. Walk in large steps
3. Walk in a “lazy S” pattern
4. End with icing the ankle

If you are an athlete progress to these more intense exercises. Wearing an ankle brace is recommended. Progress only if there is no pain. Ice before you start.

1. Jog straight ahead
2. Jog in a “lazy S” pattern
3. Jog in a “sharp Z” pattern
4. Sprint 10 yards
5. Start-stop slowly
6. Start-stop quickly
7. End with icing the ankle

Team Drills – When easing back into team drills as an athlete recovering from an ankle injury, it’s critical to test out the exercises slowly and gradually work your way through them using the following protocol:

1. 50% speed
2. 75% speed
3. 100% Speed
4. End with icing the ankle

