

R.I.C.E. (Rest, Ice, Compression, Elevation)

What is R.I.C.E.?

R.I.C.E. is short for rest, ice, compression, and elevation. Your doctors may prescribe R.I.C.E. to help reduce pain and swelling after surgery or an injury, such as a sprain, strain, broken bone, bruise, or bump.

How is it done?

Not all injuries are the same, so be sure to follow the instructions from your doctor. Here are the basic steps for R.I.C.E.:

- 1 Rest.** Don't use the injured body part, or limit the amount of time it is used. This will give your injury time to heal and prevent further harm. You may need to use a brace, sling, splint, cast, crutches, cane, or walker to help protect and rest your injury.
- 2 Ice.** Ice helps to keep swelling down, which relieves pain and pressure. To ice your injury, simply wrap a bag of ice, a frozen gel pack, or a bag of frozen vegetables in a thin towel. Place it on the injured area and leave it in place for only 15 minutes. Do this once every hour for 1 to 3 days.
- 3 Compression.** Compression wraps are bandages that prevent swelling and help keep your injury stable. Compression is usually done with an elastic bandage (sometimes called an Ace bandage). To learn how to properly wrap your injury, follow the instructions on [page 2](#).
- 4 Elevation.** To help keep swelling down, elevate (raise) the injured body part above the level of your heart. You can do this by placing pillows under the injured area until it is higher than your chest when lying down. Try to do this as much as possible.



To help reduce pain and swelling after surgery or injury use R.I.C.E.—rest, ice, compression, and elevation.



When should I call my doctor?

Call your doctor right away if you have:

- A fever of 101.5°F (38.6°C) or higher that doesn't go away
- Pain or swelling that doesn't get better with R.I.C.E.
- Numbness, tingling, coldness, or blue skin in the injured area
- Signs of an infection, such as redness, warmth and tenderness, drainage, or a foul smell

My follow-up appointment

Date/Time: _____

Place: _____

Doctor: _____

Phone: _____

How to wrap an injury

- 1 Begin wrapping the area at the point farthest away from the heart. Wind the bandage firmly around the area, moving toward the heart.
- 2 The edges should overlap by about half the bandage to help provide even pressure.
- 3 Make sure the bandage stays flat and smooth so that the skin doesn't get irritated from bumps or wrinkles.
- 4 You want the the bandage to be snug, but not tight. You should be able to slide your finger underneath the layers of the wrap.



Loosen the wrap if you feel pain, numbness, or tingling, or the skin around the area begins to turn blue. **Call your doctor if these symptoms don't go away after taking off the wrap.**



Questions for my doctor

Intermountain Healthcare complies with applicable federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex. Se proveen servicios de interpretación gratis. Hable con un empleado para solicitarlo. 我們將根據您的需求提供免費的口譯服務。請找尋工作人員協助。

© 2018 Intermountain Healthcare. All rights reserved. The content presented here is for your information only. It is not a substitute for professional medical advice, and it should not be used to diagnose or treat a health problem or disease. Please consult your healthcare provider if you have any questions or concerns. More health information is available at intermountainhealthcare.org. Patient and Provider Publications FS597-06/18 (Last reviewed -06/18) Also available in Spanish.