

Sprains and Strains

- Sprain: injury to ligament; Strain: injury to muscle or tendon
- (P)RICE therapy
 - Protection: sling, splint, brace, sleeve, boot, crutches may be used to protect the area from worsened injury by further strain or tension or direct trauma
 - Rest: mild 1-2 weeks, moderate-severe may take 4-6 weeks or more
 - Ice x 10-15 min at a time, every 2-3 hours while awake, for first 24 hours
 - Compression – wrap with elastic bandage if applicable, to reduce swelling
 - Elevation above level of heart – key to reduce swelling
- NSAIDs (ibuprofen, naproxen) – take with food: [dosing calculator for ibuprofen](#)
- Early gentle range of motion to avoid stiffness
- Resume activities as tolerated
 - Take a step-wise approach: start with walking, stretching, and ranging; continue to running and sports-specific drills as tolerated, then to practice, then competitive play
 - Stop and step back if pain resumes at any time
- If not resolving, physical therapy may be needed to strengthen particular muscle groups