

The Courtyard Clinic

Physical
Health

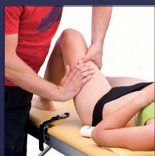


Osteopathy/Physiotherapy Sports & Remedial Massage

- Back, Neck & Shoulder pain
- Joint & Muscle Injuries
- Headaches
- Arthritis
- Rib Pain
- Sports Injuries

Podiatry/Chiropody

- Toenail Problems
- Corns & Callouses
- Verrucae
- Diabetic Foot Checks
- Foot Odour
- Footwear Advice



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Injured yourself? Maybe you need PEACE and LOVE!



You might have heard of the guidance for managing soft tissue injuries using the acronym RICE; standing for Rest, Ice, Compression and Elevation. Now this is a very good approach for the immediate effects of an injury. Managing inflammation and protecting injured tissues is vital when we first do any damage. However, RICE fails to address the important role that inflammation plays in healing, and the importance of movement and weight bearing in the return to full working order. PEACE and LOVE, whilst being a bit long-winded, guides you all the way from injury back to activity.

So what does it mean?

P for Protect

Rest or restrict movement of the injured area for 1-3 days to minimise bruising, swelling and reduce risk of aggravating the injury. Rest should be minimised as prolonged rest can lead to weakening of muscles and other tissues. Listen to your body and rely on pain as a guide when to start moving the injured area again.

E for Elevate

Elevate the limb higher than the heart to promote drainage and minimise swelling in the area.

A for Avoid anti-inflammatory medication (if possible)

There is some evidence to suggest that anti-inflammatory medications may lead to poor long-term tissue healing. This is because inflammation contributes to soft-tissue regeneration. Reducing this process using medication could impair tissue healing, especially when higher dosages are used over a long period.

There is also a question mark around over-icing injuries. Cold compresses on an injury too often and for too long

can impair circulation to the area. A good blood supply is essential to body repair as it's blood that delivers all those important nutrients needed for the process as well as removing all the waste products.

C for Compress

There is some evidence to suggest that gentle external pressure using taping or bandages helps to limit swelling and bruising.



There is an important difference between swelling and inflammation. Inflammation is (as described above) part of the healing process and the way the body gets nutrients and other substances to the tissues. Swelling is when fluids pool in a limb because their return is compromised.

E for Educate

Patients should be educated by their therapists regarding the benefits of an active approach to recovery. The temptation with any injury is to rest and let it heal, or to do too much too soon. Your therapist will be able to give you sensible advice on how long your recovery time should be, what sort of exercises you should do and when to do them, as well as advising you on what to expect along the way.

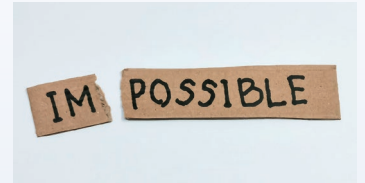
After the first days have passed, injuries need LOVE

L for Load

An active approach with movement and exercise benefits most patients with musculoskeletal injuries. Mechanical stress should be added early and normal activities resumed as soon as symptoms allow. At this stage it is important to be aware of your body. Pain-killing medication can be very counterproductive at this point as moving more than your stage of healing will allow whilst unaware of your body's cries to stop could cause

further injury. Optimal loading without exacerbating pain promotes repair and strengthens the area.

O for Optimism



Our emotional state plays a key role in recovery and rehabilitation. Psychological factors such as anxiety, depression and fear can be big barriers to recovery. Symptoms of pain and discomfort are amplified by negative emotions. Pessimism can lead to a longer healing time and a less than full recovery. It is important to stay positive but realistic. Sometimes a recovery can happen so slowly that you don't notice improvement. Things like keeping a symptom diary, logging pain out-of-ten, and recording exercises and ranges of motion can make your improvement more visible and help you to keep positive.

V for Vascularisation (Improving blood flow)

Physical activity that increases heart rate is an important part in the management of any musculoskeletal injury. Obviously you need to be very careful not to aggravate an injury, but pain-free cardiovascular activity should be started a few days after injury to boost motivation and increase blood flow to the injured structures. Early mobilisation and exercise improve function and reduce the need for pain medications in individuals with musculoskeletal conditions.

E for Exercise

There is strong evidence supporting the use of exercises for treatment of sprains and for reducing the chance of injuries recurring. Exercises will help to restore mobility and strength as soon as possible after injury. Pain should be avoided and used as a guide for progressing exercises.

So next time you injure yourself, do as John Lennon said and 'Give PEACE a chance', because maybe 'All you need is LOVE'!

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