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General Recommendations for Home Care of Injuries

Injuries are a part of athletics at all levels and understanding the proper care for injuries when you get your child home is crucial for the quickest recovery and proper return to play. Please use this as a guide; however, refer to a medical professional if you have any questions or concerns about your child's health and well-being.

General Guidelines for Home Care

- "RICE" should be followed after an injury occurs. This is a simple, yet effective method for at home care.
 - **Rest.** Have the child rest the injured body part as much as possible for the first 24-48 hours
 - **Ice** the injury site for 20 minutes (12 minutes for the elbow) no more than once per hour. The body part should return to normal prior to icing again (the site should no longer look red or feel cold to touch). This allows for the ice treatment to be the most effective in decreasing swelling and inflammation. Continue to ice for at least the first 48-72 hours after an injury.
 - **Compression** may be applied to the injury by using an Ace Wrap or other device. You can easily find an ace wrap in almost any drug store or grocery store. When applying the Ace Wrap start below the injury and work up past the injury. For example, when wrapping the ankle start at the toes and when wrapping the elbow start at the forearm. If the compression increases the pain either decrease the tightness or take off the wrap, this is very common occurrence at night.
 - **Elevation** of the injury above the heart will help to decrease the pain and swelling.
- You can also support the injury as necessary with a brace, splint or other appropriate device.
- You may give you child anti-inflammatory medications if you choose (ex. Ibuprofen, Advil, Motrin). Make sure you follow the dosage directions on the box.
- Do not heat the area for at least the first 72 hours as this will increase any swelling and inflammation
- It is normal in most cases for the pain to increase later in the same day/evening and especially the next morning when your child wakes up.

How can Accelerated Rehabilitation Centers help you?

- Assess to the Sports Medicine Hotline number that is answered by a certified athletic trainer or physical therapist who can answer questions and give you guidance on injury care as well as physician referrals
- Free injury screens for all athletes, coaches and parents at any of our locations within 24 hours. Locations may be found on our website or on the "General Information" handout
- Assistance in making appointments with physicians when necessary
- Appointments at any of our physical therapy clinics within 24-48 hours when the need for physical therapy arises

For further information on this topic or for general questions call the Sports Medicine Hotline Number