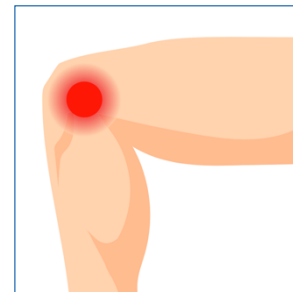


# Dealing with Knee Sprain

## TIPS FROM ORGANIZATIONAL SOLUTIONS

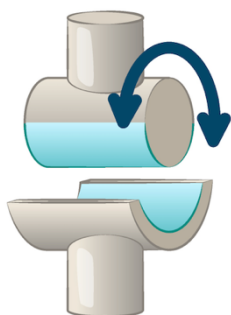
The right care, at the right time, for the right outcome.™



### BASIC INFORMATION

#### What Is a Sprained Knee?

The knee joint is called a **hinge joint** because it moves forward and backward but doesn't turn in other directions.



**Hinge Joint**

Ligaments are tough fibrous tissues that connect bones to other bones.

A knee sprain involves damage to these ligaments. It can be mild, moderate, or severe.

### WHAT CAUSES KNEE SPRAIN?

A sprain occurs when these ligaments stretch or tear.

Damage to a collateral ligament can happen when the knee is hit on the opposite side.

Damage to a cruciate ligament can occur when the knee joint is twisted or hit directly.

*Symptoms include knee pain and swelling, bruising around the knee, feeling of unsteadiness, knee giving way, and snapping feeling inside the knee.*



### HOW IS SPRAINED KNEE TREATED?

#### Treatment depends on the severity of the injury

Treatments include putting an ice pack, wrapped in cloth, on the swollen knee. Raising the leg (higher than the heart) and resting it on something like a soft pillow may help swelling go away.



The health care provider may prescribe anti-inflammatory drugs to help pain and swelling.

The knee can be wrapped in an elastic compression bandage.

Crutches may help until walking is possible without pain. Exercises may reduce stiffness. The health care provider may suggest a knee brace to control joint movement.

For a severe injury with a ligament that was completely torn, surgery may be needed to fix the ligament. Recovery may take 2 to 3 months or longer.

A mild sprain may take 2 to 3 weeks for full recovery. A severe sprain may take 6 weeks or longer. Recovery will be slower if sports or other activities that put pressure on the knee joint are restarted too soon.

## HOME TREATMENT

**R** **REST** keeps you from hurting the knee again or putting stress on inflamed tissue. A brace or splint can take pressure off the joint.

**I** **ICE** is probably the best treatment. Put it on your ankle to lower blood flow and help with swelling, redness, and warmth. It can prevent inflammation if you do it quickly after an injury.

**C** **COMPRESSION** can keep down swelling. Use an elastic bandage or wrap until the swelling goes down. Always start wrapping at the point farthest from your heart. Don't wrap so tightly that you cut off the blood flow.

**E** **ELEVATION** (keeping the injured area up as high as possible) will help your body absorb extra fluid. It's best to prop your ankle up so that it's higher than your heart, as with a reclining chair.

**R I C E**



BE YOUR OWN ADVOCATE



### Questions to ask

- 1) What is causing my ankle pain?
- 2) What investigations can be done?
- 3) What line of treatment do we follow?
- 4) What level of pain reduction can I expect once treatment starts?
- 5) When should I book a time with my therapist?
- 6) How can I tell if it's worsening?
- 7) What should I do if it gets worse?

## DOs AND DON'Ts FOR SPRAINED KNEES



**DO** follow the advice you get about whether to put weight on your leg.

**DO** be patient. You may not be able to do sports for several weeks.

**DO** report continued swelling or pain to your health care provider.

**DO** follow instructions for rehabilitation so that you develop good strength and stability and don't injure the knee again. This may prevent another sprain.

**DO** use safe techniques and warm-up stretching exercises. They may reduce the risk of knee injury.

**DO** ask your health care provider about taking anti-inflammatory medicines regularly.

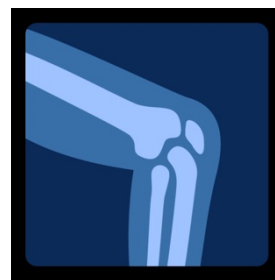
**DON'T** return to normal activities or sports if your knee still feels unstable.

**DON'T** forget to do your rehabilitation exercises.

**DON'T** try to do activities that cause you pain.



## SPRAINED KNEE RECOVERY TIME



A knee sprain is considered healed when there's no more pain or swelling, and you can move your knee freely.

Many grade 1 and 2 knee sprains heal within two to four weeks. People who need surgery, however, may take as long as four to six months to recover.