



Phases of Injury Recovery

During the acute recovery phase you should be following the [R.I.C.E. principles](#) (rest, ice, compression and elevation), limiting your activity, allowing yourself time to heal.

Depending on the type and severity of your injury, treatment may also include medical care, surgery, various taping, bracing, or physical therapy treatments.

While your injury heals try to maintain overall conditioning if possible. Try alternate forms of training such as water running, swimming, cycling, rowing or weight training of the non-injured parts.

Regaining range of motion and strength should be started as soon as possible as directed by your physician or therapist. Use discomfort as a guide and avoid movements that cause pain. Once muscle strength and flexibility return you can slowly get back into your sport, working at about 50 to 70 percent max capacity for a few weeks. During this re-entry phase, functional drills for balance, agility, and speed can be added as tolerated.

Guidelines for Safe Return to Sports

- You are pain free
- You have no swelling
- You have full range of motion (compare the injured part with the uninjured opposite side)
- You have full or close to full (90 percent) strength (compare with the uninjured side)
- For lower body injuries - you can perform full weight bearing on injured hips, knees, and ankles without limping
- For upper body injuries - you can perform throwing movements with proper form and no pain

Keep in mind that even when you feel 100 percent you may have deficits in strength, joint stability, flexibility or skill. Take extra care with the injured part for several months.

- These are guidelines only; you should follow your physician's advice regarding return to sports.
- Coaches will assess athletes readiness to come back to regular practices
- Coaches will advise athletes on modified schedule to allow for gradual come back to regular activities and training schedule

May 2014