# Sprain and Strain

**IN A MEDICAL EMERGENCY CALL TRIPLE ZERO (000) FOR AN AMBULANCE.**

**DRSABCD** Danger ➤ Response ➤ Send for help ➤ Airway ➤ Breathing ➤ CPR ➤ Defibrillation

The DRSABCD Action Plan is the first step when providing first aid. Use this to assess the immediate situation.

**WARNING**

It can be difficult to tell whether an injury is a fracture, dislocation, sprain or strain. If in doubt, always treat as a fracture.

**SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS**

**Sprain**
- intense pain
- restricted movement of the injured joint
- rapid development of swelling and bruising

**Strain**
- sharp, sudden pain in the region of the injury
- usually loss of power
- muscle tenderness

**WHAT TO DO**

1. Follow DRSABCD.
2. Follow RICE:
   - **Rest** – rest the patient and the injured part
   - **Ice** – apply an ice pack or cold pack for 15 minutes every 2 hours for 24 hours, then for 15 minutes every 4 hours for 24 hours
   - **Compression** – apply a compression bandage firmly to extend well beyond the injury
   - **Elevation** – elevate the injured part.
3. Avoid HARM:
   - Heat
   - Alcohol
   - Running or other exercise of the injured area
   - Massage.
4. Seek medical aid.