



Managing an Injury

Trauma generally refers to Physical or bodily injury. Lately Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is fast becoming a common term and generally refers to effects on the mind after exposure to either physical or psychological trauma.

The dictionary definition of TRAUMA is -

Trauma, in psychiatry, is an unpleasant emotional experience of such intensity that it leaves a lasting impression on the mind. It is now accepted, more so in Homoeopathy, that childhood traumatic experiences very often lead to emotional symptoms later in life. Traumas that occur during adulthood also may have effects that require psychological support/ treatment. Such trauma may be physical like severe injury or illness or psychological-like witnessing mass destruction or sexual molestation.

Commonest traumas seen in practice are as a result of:

- Jerks – sprains and strains
- Falls – bruises, wounds and fractures
- Bumps – hits on the head leading to concussions
- Jumps

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Barring bleeding all other form of physical trauma require the same non-pharmacological approach:

The “RICE” method helps control pain and swelling and minimize the side affects of an injury.

Rest

Ice

Compression

Elevation

How does RICE work?

When any tissue is damaged, fluid accumulates in the injured area, leading to oedema. This oedema limits the range of movement of the joint and contributes to pain if bad enough.

REST is essential to keep an injury from getting worse. If patients continue to function the tissue damage may aggravate. This doesn't mean that all activities have to be stopped completely. We must try “relative rest.” which means continuing an activity if pain allows, or switching to an activity that doesn't cause pain - like swimming for an ankle sprain. If any activity hurts, advise NOT to do it. It may mean that the patient can do only part of an activity, but this might be better than stopping it completely.

ICE or anything cold can effectively decrease pain from an injury. Icing deadens pain and beneficially changes



blood circulation: It increases circulation to the skin but decreases it in deeper tissues where bleeding may be occurring. An ice pack can be used on the injured part as soon as possible and kept there for 20 minutes. Ideally one must place a thin sheet, napkin, or apply a layer of mineral oil between the skin and the pack to protect the skin surface.

Smaller areas can be treated with ice massage. Ice cubes in a handkerchief can be rubbed on the injured part for 5 to 10 minutes. If the skin turns white or blue during icing or ice massage, stop immediately. Cold treatment can be repeated every 2 hours. There is no advantage to using ice packs or massage longer or more often.

COMPRESSION of the injured area prevents fluid from collecting. An elastic wrap or stocking is very effective and should be applied, firmly but not tightly, right away. (ice can be applied right through a thin wrap.) If the most distal part of the arm or leg throbs after compression, than the bandage is too tight and needs to be loosened. Reapply compression bandage every 4 hours. Compression helps if the swelling is from bleeding, and it also decreases pain. Most people feel better with something tight (but not too tight) on an injured wrist or ankle.

ELEVATION of the affected extremity limits swelling

by using gravity to help drain fluid from the injured tissue. Of course, this advice is more practical for ankles and hands than backs and hips. Whenever resting, elevate the injured arm or leg.

Resuming normal activity: Using the RICE method for pain control may allow your patient back into the normal routine without taking a lot of time off. But remember: He is not healed just because the injury doesn't hurt anymore. He still has to regain normal range of movement and strength. Until this happens, the patient is more likely to get reinjured.

HEAD INJURY

A sharp blow to the head could result in a concussion, a jostling of the brain inside its protective, bony covering. A more serious head injury may result in contusions, or bruises to the brain. A period of unconsciousness, vomiting or bleeding from Ear, nose and throat may indicate brain damage and accompanies many head injuries.

ACTIVE BLEEDING

For any wound with active bleeding, the best first aid is to bring the edges of the wound together and apply pressure for about 10 minutes. A clean dressing applied with enough pressure to stop bleeding is also helpful. □

Trauma to the Tooth

The fracture or loss of the tooth due to trauma has a great psychological impact on both the parent and the child especially when anterior teeth and / or permanent teeth are affected. The majority of fracture and displacement of teeth along with involvement of perioral

tissue result from simple accidents, which may lead an attractive child to appear unattractive and cranky due to pain and discomfort. This appearance makes him/her the target for teasing by other children and can be unintentionally cruel.

For the dentist it is very important to preserve the tooth, along with the vitality of pulp whenever possible, to their original appearance. At this point the Homoeopath can play a vital role by choosing the right remedy to control the pain and resultant swelling due to inflamma-



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