

# **First Aid** **For Strains & Sprains**

## **Preventing Strains and Sprains**

- Warm up for any physical activity, whether it's work or play.
- Get in shape and wear proper equipment for your activity.
- Slow down and stretch when your activity is finished.
- Use proper lifting techniques.

**Sprain:** a torn or badly stretched ligament, usually in a joint

**Strain:** a torn or badly stretched muscle or tendon

### **The Symptoms Are the Same:**

- pain
- swelling
- difficulty moving the joint
- black and blue areas

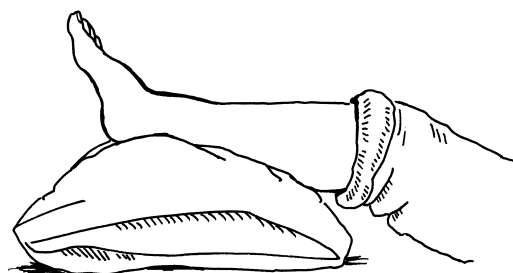
### **First Aid...**

- Stop using the injured part immediately.
- Raise the injured part above the level of the heart, resting it on blankets.
- Firmly (but not tightly) wrap a strain in an elastic bandage.
- Apply ice wrapped in a towel or bag for periods of 30 minutes, with 15-minute breaks in between.
- After 48 hours, moist heat and gentle stretching are OK.

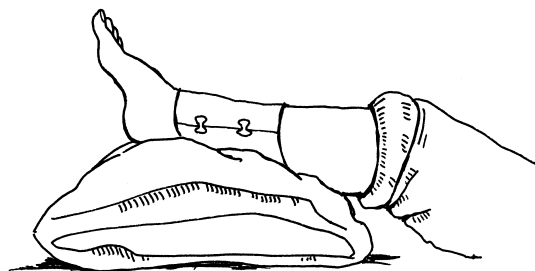
If there is a chance of a broken bone, don't move the joint. Apply a splint if possible.

### **Get Medical Help If...**

- there is a chance that a bone is broken.
- a sprain is moderate or severe.
- pain is very strong or lasts more than 24 hours.
- swelling doesn't go down after 24 hours.



*Elevate the injured part.*



*Wrap a strain in an elastic bandage.*



*Apply ice for periods of 30 minutes.*