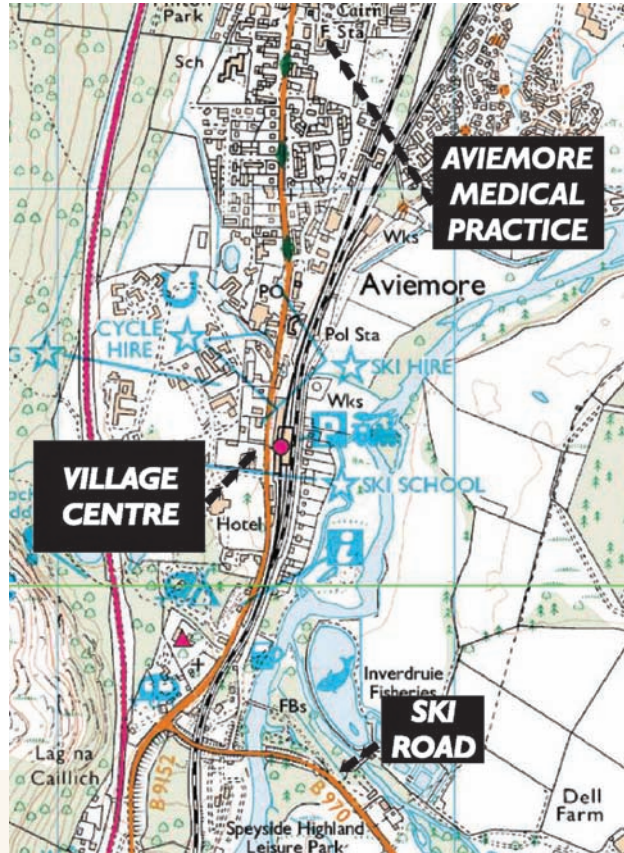


# Directions for Aviemore Medical Practice



## Advice sheet on soft tissue injuries from snow sports

Sorry to hear you've been unlucky and ended up with a soft tissue injury – this might be bruising, a muscle strain, a ligament sprain or any combination of the three. Just because a bone is not broken though does not mean your injury isn't important – it is! This sheet is designed to offer you good advice to help get you back to full fitness as soon as possible. It is very important to start the correct management straight away, the first 24 hours post-injury in particular are critical if your injury is to stand the best chance of healing well. By following the guidance on this sheet you should ensure that you have the best chance of a full recovery.

This advice sheet has been written by Dr Mike Langran from the Aviemore Medical Practice who runs the [www.ski-injury.com](http://www.ski-injury.com) website on snow sports injuries. Whilst it is based on the best available medical evidence, it is intended to give general guidance only and no responsibility can be taken for any adverse outcome that occurs as a result of following the advice given. If in doubt, please contact your own doctor or the Aviemore Medical Practice on 01479 810258. Any feedback on this advice sheet would be gratefully received – send any comments to

[info@ski-injury.com](mailto:info@ski-injury.com)

## The priorities after a soft tissue injury are:

### 1) Protection

This prevents further injury to the damaged area. Obviously this means that you may not be able to continue skiing or boarding – but better to let an injury heal than end up with a chronically recurring problem that puts you off the snow for much longer.

### 2) Compression

This helps to minimise swelling at the site of injury. Swelling increases pressure and this causes more pain. You may have had a crepe bandage applied to the injured area by the ski patrol. This shouldn't be so tight as to be painful but should offer adequate support.

### 3) Elevation

As much as possible, try to keep the injured area elevated for the first 48 hours at least. This will also help to minimise any swelling. For injuries to the shoulder, collar bone, elbow, wrist or hand you may have been placed in a broad arm sling or collar and cuff. Whilst these will help to keep your arm elevated, it is important that you don't keep your arm in the sling or cuff all the time. To do so will lead to stiffness in the elbow and/or shoulder. Try and slip your arm out of the sling or cuff at least 4 x a day and move your shoulder and elbow gently. As the discomfort from the injury settles, you'll be able to do this more frequently and vigorously until you don't need the sling/cuff any more. Finally, don't wear the sling/cuff in bed at night – might sound obvious but every season we hear of people half strangling themselves in the process! Support your arm on pillows instead.

### 4) Ice

Or, more specifically, cooling. This helps to reduce the amount of tissue damage that occurs at the site of injury. Never apply ice directly to an injury – wrap crushed ice in (for example) a tea towel. A bag of frozen peas moulds well to most parts of the body. Try to apply something cool to the injured area for 10-15 minutes at a time at least every 4 hours if not more. It should not be painful – if anything, it should help reduce the pain. Whatever you do, don't apply heat to an injured area especially not in the first 72 hours – so this means no hot baths!

### 5) Rest

We all want to get on doing the things we love again as quickly as possible. However, it is important to allow soft tissue injuries to heal properly – the worst thing you can do is try and do too much too soon and re-injure the same area. This could mean more damage and inevitably more time away from your usual activities. We recommend that every injury is reassessed by a doctor within a week of the accident so that they can advise you further. If necessary, this can be arranged in Aviemore (see below for the contact number).

### 6) Referral

To give your injury the best chance of full recovery, we strongly recommend that you see a chartered physiotherapist as soon as possible. This can be arranged through your own GP or look one up in the local Yellow Pages.

### 7) Anti-inflammatories

This means ibuprofen – which you can buy over the counter at Tesco's or Aviemore pharmacy. Check with the chemist or on the label if you're not sure if you can take them. Aim to take 400mg at least three times a day after food for 5-7 days. Although they will reduce the pain they are doing much more than this and you should complete the full course even if your injury feels much better. Taking them here and there simply as pain killers means they won't work as well to help your injury to heal.

Cairngorm Ski Patrol would like to thank the following organisations for the continued support and assistance.

