

# 3 Tips from an Orthopedic Surgeon



GLACIAL RIDGE  
HEALTH SYSTEM  
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You started a new exercise program or joined a sports league to get more active. But along the way, you get hurt. Maybe you pulled a muscle, twisted an ankle, over-exerted yourself, or fell wrong – but now you’re in pain. You see swelling and you can’t get around that easily. What do you do now?

## Tip 1: Listen to Your Body

Soreness and strains are common during and after physical activity. Since it is your body, you can tell the difference between your normal aches and pains and a possible injury. If you think you have experienced an injury, you should:

- Immediately stop all activity — don’t “play or work through” pain
- Follow the “R.I.C.E.” method:
  - **R**est the injury or sore area
  - **I**ce it to reduce pain and swelling
  - Use **C**ompression by applying an elastic or ACE bandage to help decrease swelling
  - **E**levate the injured or sore area at or above the level of your heart to help minimize swelling
- If the injury does not improve within two days, see a physician

## Tip 2: See the Warning Signs

These warning signs may indicate you need immediate orthopedic care:

- Pain, especially joint pain that worsens when resting or at night
- Persistent joint swelling or bruising even after following the R.I.C.E. method
- Decreased range of motion
- Noticeable deformity
- Joint instability
- Failed improvement

## Tip 3: Avoid Injury

To avoid possible injury, you should:

- Perform warm-ups and stretches before physical activity
- Perform cool down exercises and stretches at the end of physical activity
- When starting a new exercise program, begin slowly over time to acclimate your body to the increased activity
- Perform workouts that build muscle strength to increase joint stability
- Be mindful of your age and fitness level at all times

Call 320.634.5157 to schedule an appointment with Glacial Ridge Health System's orthopedic surgeon, Dr. Joshua Thomas, at Glenwood Medical Center in Glenwood, Minnesota.