How you first deal with a sudden injury has a bearing on how good and how quick your recovery is. You should follow the PRICE guidelines below:

**P**rotect the area so you don’t keep inadvertently re-injuring it. Exactly what you need to do depends on the area that has been damaged. Protective supports can include crutches, a sling, braces, splints and taping. You may be able to apply this yourself or we can help you with this.

**R**est is important during the early phase of healing as it prevents the injured area being stressed. After a day or two you can generally start to move the area again making sure you don’t load it too much. This depends on the severity and type of injury so advice from one of our physios can be very beneficial here.

**I**ce will help to minimise swelling and reduce pain. The easiest way is to use some crushed ice or a bag of frozen peas wrapped up in a damp thin towel before applying it to the skin. Unwrapped ice can lead to an ice burn which clearly won’t help! Hold the ice in place by wrapping a dry towel around the pack for around 20 minutes and repeat this every few hours until the pain has settled and the swelling/heat has diminished.

**C**ompression can help minimise swelling and should be applied as soon as possible following the injury. Tubigrip is the commonest way of applying compression but other strapping/bandages can be used. Be careful when using compression – it must be removed at night and you need to be sure that it doesn’t prevent adequate blood flow to the ends of the limbs. Always check the areas that are furthest from the body (e.g. fingers and toes) for any signs of reduced blood supply (lack of colour or numbness).

**E**levating the injured area above the level of the chest can help minimise swelling and should be done as soon as possible after the injury. Ensure there is sufficient support - lying down (using cushions or pillows) is usually the easiest and most comfortable.