



# Health & Wellbeing



**Ed Naing** is a new member of the Physio Motion team and is a Chartered Physiotherapist originally from Australia. He has over seven years experience in both gym based and hospital based Physiotherapy. He specialises in Rehabilitation of the Older Adult and also has a keen interest in helping people return to sport after an injury. In his first article for SEBRA NEWS W2 Ed offers great advice for injury recovery.

## Show your injuries some PEACE & LOVE to get you back on track!



For years, you might have heard of R.I.C.E (Rest, Ice, Compression, Elevation) as the go-to treatment for soft tissue injuries. While that was a good starting point and the C.E part of that acronym still stands, our understanding of how to best help your body heal has evolved. Today, I want to introduce you to a more comprehensive approach that physiotherapists and other clinicians are embracing: PEACE & LOVE.

These two simple words represent a powerful framework for managing soft tissue injuries, guiding you from the moment of injury right through to recovery. Let's break down what they mean for you.

### In the first few days, give it some PEACE

Immediately after an injury, your body needs a calm and supportive environment to kickstart the healing process. Think **PEACE**:

- **P for Protect:** For the first 1 to 3 days, it's crucial to de-load or minimise movement of the injured area. This helps to minimise swelling, prevents any injured fibres from stretching further, and reduce the risk of making the injury worse. However, don't overdo the rest! Prolonged rest can actually weaken the tissues. Listen to your body – pain is a good signal to guide you.
- **E for Elevate:** Try to keep the injured limb higher than the level of your heart as often as possible. This helps to encourage excess fluid to flow away from the injured area.

- **A for Avoid Anti-Inflammatories:** This might surprise you! While anti-inflammatory medications can help with pain, they might actually hinder long-term tissue healing. Inflammation is a natural and necessary part of the repair process. We also question the widespread use of ice for similar reasons; there's actually no strong evidence that it helps, and it could potentially disrupt the healing stages.
- **C for Compress:** Using an elasticated bandage or compression sleeve can help to limit swelling in the tissues. Studies have shown that compression after an ankle sprain, for example, can reduce swelling and improve outcomes in the long run.
- **E for Educate:** As a physio, a big part of my job is to help you understand your body and the recovery process. An active approach to recovery is generally best. Passive treatments like electrotherapy or even some manual therapies right after an injury often don't have significant long-term benefits compared to getting you moving appropriately. Understanding your condition and how to manage load helps you avoid over-treatment and reliance on quick fixes.

### After the initial phase, show it some LOVE

Once the first few days have passed and things have settled a bit, your soft tissues need **LOVE** to get back to their best:

- **L for Load:** It's time to gradually get moving again! Your body will tell you when it's safe to start increasing activity. Introducing movement and exercises helps most musculoskeletal problems. We'll work together to find the right level of "optimal loading" – enough to encourage repair and build strength in your tendons, muscles, and ligaments, but not so much that it causes prolonged pain and setbacks.
- **O for Optimism:** Believe it or not, your mindset plays a huge role in recovery! Being confident and positive can lead to better outcomes. Psychological factors like fear of movement or catastrophizing can actually be barriers to getting better.
- **V for Vascularisation:** Getting your heart rate up with pain-free cardiovascular exercise is key. Lower impact activities like cycling or swimming a few days after injury can boost blood flow to the healing tissues and even lift your spirits. This kind of activity helps improve physical function and can reduce the need for pain medication.
- **E for Exercise:** This is where physiotherapy really shines! Specific exercises are vital to restore mobility, strength, and proprioception (your body's awareness of its position). We'll tailor an exercise program to your specific injury, guiding you on how to progress without overdoing it, always using pain as our guide.

Exercise in the **LOVE** phase is key to soft tissue recovery.



Managing a soft tissue injury is about more than just quick fixes. It's about understanding your body, treating the whole person, and aiming for the best possible long-term recovery. So, next time you or someone you know experiences a sprain or strain, remember to give it some **PEACE** and then show it some **LOVE**!

If you have any questions or an injury you'd like to discuss, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

### PhysioMotion Ltd

10 Stratton Street, London, W1J 8LG  
[www.physiomotionlimited.co.uk](http://www.physiomotionlimited.co.uk)  
 020 3422 6655