

Whether your child is playing an organized sport or just playing in the backyard, injuries such as sprains and strains are common. In fact, over 45,000 children in the United States are seen in emergency rooms each year for sprains and strains. While they may sound similar, there are distinct differences between the two.

Is It a Sprain or a Strain?

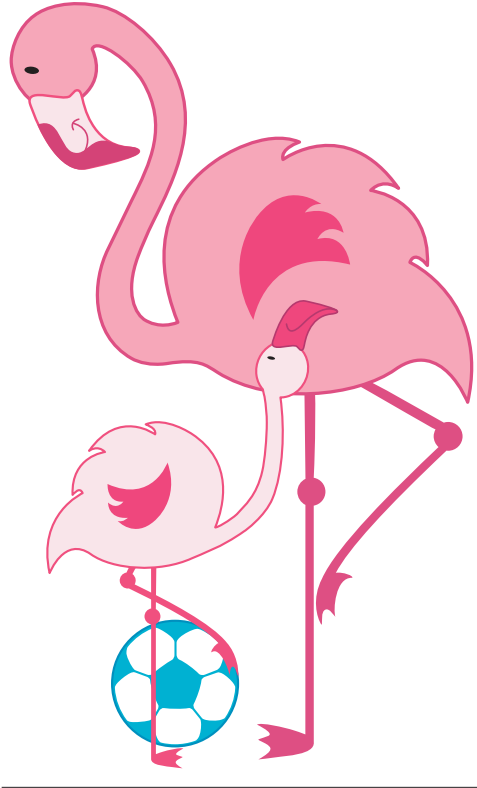
	What is it?	What causes it?	Symptoms
Sprain	A stretch or tear of a ligament (tissue that joins the end of one bone to another).	A fall or hit that overstretchs a ligament.	Vary from light swelling and pain to lots of swelling, pain, and instability.
Strain	An injury to a muscle or tendon (tissue that attaches muscles to bone) as a result of the muscle being over stretched or tearing.	Overuse, overstretching, or a hit to the body.	Range from mild pain and swelling to severe pain, swelling, and trouble walking.

Treatment Tips

One of best ways to treat a sprain or strain is with **RICE**—Rest, Ice, Compression, and Elevation. RICE is often recommended for the first 24 or 48 hours after the injury.

- R Rest:**
Reduce activity and stop using the injured area for at least 48 hours.
- I Ice:**
Put an ice pack on the injured area for 20 minutes at a time, 4 to 8 times per day.
- C Compression:**
Bandage the injured area to help reduce swelling.
- E Elevation:**
Elevate the injured area (above heart-level) to help decrease swelling.

Over-the-counter medications, such as ibuprofen (found in MOTRIN®), can also help reduce pain. However, if pain or swelling still persist after 1 or 2 days, have your child see a medical professional.



Download FREE Kids' Wellness Tracker

Track your child's height, weight, BMI, vaccines, symptoms, and medicines, plus calculate dosing.



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