

Scenario 4: Forearm Contusion

S- ath. reported into the ATR complaining of pn. on her R forearm. Ath. remembers falling at practice on the gym floor. She has had no previous injury to the area. Pain was rated as a 3/10.

O- pain with palpation on the anterior portion of her forearm.

(+) minor swelling

(+) palpable spasm

(+) minor ecchymosis

pain with resistive flexion, 4/10

strength is a 5/5

A- moderate forearm contusion

p- reduce spasm and ecchymosis using ice and non-thermal US

PROTOCOL:

Immediately after injury:

After ruling out any situations that would indicate a more serious injury I would have the athlete apply ice to the area and rest her arm in an elevated state. This is going to help discourage anymore swelling from settling in the area. We could also couple the ice treatment with a pulsed US treatment after the ice is removed. The ultrasound will be used to further fluid movement and break up any scar tissue that might be accumulating around the injury site.

One week after evaluation:

We would assess whether or not the treatment are working. Within a week the contusion should be pretty much healed. Unless it was really bad at the beginning the bruise should be on its way out, no pain with movement should be left. If there is some pain still hanging around we might couple an ultrasound treatment with some hydrocortisone for a phonophoresis treatment. Another way to ice would be the use of ice massage. This is also nice because the athlete can do their own treatment in case you are busy.

With my ACI I talked about possible things that needed to be worried about when you have someone with a contusion. We decided that while the athlete is doing her ice treatment it would be a good idea to have her do some muscle pumping exercises in order to keep the fluid moving. This is going to help the swelling decrease which in turn decreases pain. We also talked about stretching to discourage the formation of a calcification. This would be accomplished by working on range of motion while decreasing pain in the area. I would encourage the athlete to stretch whenever possible. She really liked my idea with the ice cup. Depending on how many athletes you have it can be a huge time saver to have athletes be active in their own treatments. You can also get an athlete set up with ice cups at their own house, and then they can do treatments whenever they need them, even when they are not in the training room.