

## 71. SPRAINS AND STRAINS

In a tennis game or a walk around a mall, tripping and spraining an ankle is usually just a painful inconvenience. It might call for a trip to the doctor or even the emergency room, true. But in "the bigger picture," it's still a pretty minor sort of ailment.

When you're toting a 60 or 70 lb. rucksack, plus whatever other paraphernalia you might need back in the boonies, "it's a whole 'nother story," as they say. Many years ago, I suffered a "simple" twisted ankle from a misstep on the trail while hauling our group's kitchen pack to our next campsite, way back in bear country. Many hours later, near dusk, I hobbled into camp, thanks to the assistance of two of my chums and an improvised crutch.

Without their assistance, my bones might still be rotting out there, for I truly was totally helpless and humbled.

Then, I was a teenager who had no respect for the frailties of the body. I knew a snippet of first-aid, nothing more. And until that moment, I knew for an absolute fact that I was invincible.

Today, however, it would probably be a much different story. In the first place, I have learned there are simple ways of self-treating most sprains and strains -- methods and modalities that require little formal training, but which can literally "erase" the pain and suffering in a matter of seconds. And in the second place, I probably would have a lot more respect for my body and its shortcomings than I did back then.

Before going further, let's define our terms: "Sprains" are *injuries to soft tissue around joints*; "sprains" are *injuries to muscles normally away from joints*. You can sprain an ankle or wrist; or you can strain or "pull" a hamstring muscle. For "self-health" purposes, the treatment is normally similar.

You may have heard of the "**R.I.C.E.**" **formula** for treating sports injuries, such as strains or sprains: **Rest ... Ice ... Compression** (such as an elastic bandage wrapped around the swelling area) ... and **Elevation** -- keeping the injured area above heart level, if possible. In theory, it works fine. And it may even work well back in bear country, as long as you have the luxury of time and a comfortable setting next to an icy brook.

In standard first-aid practice, the goal is to stop the swelling as quickly as possible, and to relieve the pain. There are a variety of modalities to achieve this reasonable goal.

In a survival setting, however, the goal is to be back up and mobile in as short a time as possible. For this, the only known means is to immediately apply **G-Jo Acupressure**.

G-Jo is a kind of acupuncture, but which relies only on the fingertips, not needles (or any other intrusive means). Deep, goading pressure -- a digging, painful massage, really -- is applied to the tiny, appropriate "therapy spots" on the body which "control" the affected area. It is repeated as often as needed, and is usually indicated if, and when, the target symptom returns.

In an emergency setting, G-Jo might need to be applied every minute, or two, in the beginning of treatment. In the first day of treatment, you might have to "trigger" each of the "good" (effective) G-Jo Acupressure points four or five dozen times, or more, then gradually reduce its use as you begin experiencing increasing spans of "relief time."

Many theories have been presented to explain how this almost miraculous technique seems to work. None have been proven scientifically, except to note that, when an appropriate acupuncture

point is properly triggered, the body experiences an increase in endorphins and certain other biochemicals. Beyond that, it's a mystery ... at least to Western medical science. But there is no doubt this technique works, and works well, when properly applied.

For example, the first G-Jo Acupressure point I would think of in terms of **relieving any kind of muscle distress is point #62**. This tiny spot is located slightly below the level of the bottom of the kneecap, on the outer side of the leg, in the slight depression that is formed when the knee is completely straight. It is located at the top of the calf muscle, and will be quite painful upon pressure when one or more muscles are in distress.

Another good "general" G-Jo Acupressure point **for pain associated with sprains and strains is point #5**. This powerful point is located on the outside of the foot, in the soft hollow or depression behind the bony bulge of the outer ankle.

To contact this point, press deeply in that hollow; if the spot does not reveal itself immediately, move slightly down toward the foot; or slightly back, toward the achilles tendon; or slightly up, toward the calf muscle; or even forward, toward the ankle bone ... but always keeping within the general confines of that hollow, depressed area.

These, two points, used together, are an excellent combination for virtually all muscle strains and joint sprains. Other G-Jo points may be added to "target" the specific bodily area affected. For instance, I would additionally trigger **G-Jo point #4 for a sprained wrist**. This is found on the outside ("hairy side") of the arm, in the depression located about two inches back, toward the elbow, from the crease of the wrist. Download a free Basic G-Jo Training Chart from The G-Jo Institute's website [www.g-jo.com](http://www.g-jo.com) for illustrations of six important G-Jo points.

Naturally, I would also take whatever other steps that seem necessary. The first *traditional*, non-acupressure step with any sprain or strain is to **apply cold**. If you don't have any ice or cold-packs available simply pour the coldest water you can find onto the affected area. If possible, put the water in a large pitcher and **pour it onto the area from well above the site of the injury**.

Later, once the swelling is absolutely stopped, you can **apply warmth** to help reduce any swelling.

However, by using G-Jo Acupressure immediately after the injury occurs, you should actually be able stop and even reverse (heal) any swelling that might ordinarily occur. At least, I have done so on several occasions. But if you're too late, and it's already swollen, **wrapping the area with an elastic bandage** (as well as using G-Jo) is also a good idea.

If you have them available, four common kitchen substances can also be wonderfully helpful in easing strains and sprains. **Vinegar** (either alone, or mixed with **salt**) can be heated; then soak a towel or cloth in the liquid and lay it onto the affected area, as a compress. Repeat the process each time the compress cools. Or make a **paste of the vinegar and salt**, and massage it into the affected area, repeating as needed.

If you have a **lemon** or two, you can slice them up and lay the slices atop the affected area. Bind the slices into place and let stand for at least several hours.

**Cayenne (red) pepper powder** is one of nature's most powerful healers. For muscle distress, making a strong "tea" from red pepper and hot water, then soaking a towel or washcloth in it to make another form of compress, can be extremely effective. In recent years, even Western science has jumped on the "cayenne bandwagon," by mixing its active ingredients with aspirin to

make a very effective creme for relief of arthritic pain.

But whichever route you choose for self-treating sprains and strains, please act quickly. If you deal with the problem immediately, you will often be able to be up and back in action with little (if any) damage to show for your injury. (All the many G-Jo Acupressure points and their hundreds of uses are found in the G-Jo Institute's *Master of G-Jo Acupressure Home-Study Certification Program* -- see [www.g-jo.com](http://www.g-jo.com) ).