

What Do Gladiators and the Weekend Warrior Have In Common?

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**By Louise Roach**

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Strip off the tie and grab your running shoes, golf clubs or baseball mitt! The weekend has arrived. You look forward to extra time on Saturday and Sunday to enjoy your favorite sport. And you probably cram in as much activity as possible before Monday morning rolls around. You're a weekend warrior!

If you find yourself nursing a painful knee or strained muscle at the office, you are in the company of gladiators.

Favored gladiators were considered the sports heroes of their day. If a gladiator survived serious injury, they were attended to by sports physicians for common problems such as sprains, torn ligaments and muscle strains. The first doctor to gain notoriety for treating gladiators was Galen, acclaimed as the father of sports medicine. Living from 129 to 199 BC, Galen traveled throughout Rome bandaging— up gladiators. Although Galen used a form of traction to set bones and was considered way ahead of his time, he was not aware of the simple principle of R.I.C.E. (rest—ice—compression—elevation) to treat sports—related injuries.

Today, it's easy for weekend warriors to take care of minor sprains and strains using the recommended technique of R.I.C.E. According to the Merck Manual of Diagnosis and Therapy, "more than 10 million sports injuries are treated each year in the USA. Athletes and non— athletes share many similar injuries...Immediate treatment for almost all acute athletic injuries is R.I.C.E."

Here is the four—part method for using R.I.C.E.:

**Rest:** Stop the activity causing pain and allow the injured area to rest for 2 to 3 days.

**Ice:** To decrease swelling and numb pain, apply ice in the form of ice packs or ice massage as soon as possible. Treat for a period of 48 to 72 hours after an injury happens. Ice applications should last for 10 to 30 minutes until the point of numbness. Longer icing periods should be avoided as this could

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result in tissue damage. Allow the skin to return to normal temperature before reapplying an ice pack.

**Compression:** To decrease swelling and bruising, compression should be applied immediately using a compression or elastic wrap, or athletic tape. Do not apply compression to the point of cutting off circulation (a feeling of numbness or tingling). Compression can also be used at the same time an ice pack is being applied.

**Elevation:** Raise the injured area to above heart level to minimize internal bleeding and swelling.

Unlike yesterday's gladiators, today's weekend warriors who survive the trials of running too hard, pitching a no-hitter or shooting too many hoops, are better prepared. With a reusable ice pack in hand and knowledge of R.I.C.E., every warrior can triumph over pain.

**Disclaimer:** This information is not intended as a substitute for professional medical treatment or consultation. Always consult with your physician in the event of a serious injury.

About the Author:

Louise Roach is a health and fitness editor, marketing specialist, and product development consultant. She helps others find pain relief through the use of SnowPack reusable, chemical-free ice packs, the SnowPack SportCover and SnowPack Body-n- Ice Kits. Learn more about the benefits of ice therapy at

<http://www.snowpackusa.com/>

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### **Madonna Born Under The Gladiator Flower**

**By Wesley Berry**

Madonna - warrior, queen of pop, or beloved star - take your pick because any of those descriptions matches with her August birth flower the gladiolus. The gladiolus, which is often called the Sword Lily because of its shape, was, in fact, named after the gladiator's weapon of choice, the sword. The root of the word gladiolus is "gladius," which means sword.

Though it has ancient associations with working class gladiators, the gladiolus is also marked by nobility. The gladiolus was chosen by the founders of the French monarchy to appear in the fleur-de-lys, the royal emblem of France.

The gladiolus is also a flower of romance. An arrangement of gladiolus shows the recipient that he or she "pierces the heart" like the sword after which it is named. In fact, the roots of the gladiolus were

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once thought to be an aphrodisiac.

Gladiolus make an excellent choice for flower gardens, though they grow best in warmer locations since they have their origin in the hot African climate. However, they are a relatively inexpensive flower, so they're a good choice even in colder areas of the country since they can be planted in stages throughout the gardening season.

Though its blossoms resemble the trumpet shape of the daffodil, the gladiolus grows not from a bulb, but from a corm with a level bottom and spiky top. When you plant the corm, be sure to plant it with the point up in a hole that is about four inches deep. For the most attractive arrangement, be sure to plant them in groups of at least seven with five inches of space between each corm.

Gladiolus also make excellent cutting flowers and are frequently used in professional flower arrangements. If you plan to cut them from your own flower garden, you should bring a deep container of warm water with you to the garden. After cutting the stems at an angle, immediately place them in the water. Before arranging them in a vase, place them in a cool dark place for a few hours. Thereafter, cut about an inch off the stem every few days to keep them fresher longer.

Lover, fighter, or royalty—the gladiolus fits almost every personality and remains among the most popular flowers in the country. You'll find it at weddings, funerals, and in arrangements used to celebrate all stages of life. Considering that Madonna fits the bill for all three of the gladiolus' meanings and has been reinventing herself throughout the stages of her life, there's no doubt that she couldn't have been born under a more appropriate birth flower.

Wesley Berry is the President of Wesley Berry Flowers established in 1946. He is also the Headmaster of the Professional Florists' Institute, floral design school in Michigan. Visit Wesley Berry Flowers on the web at

<http://www.800wesleys.com>

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