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patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk



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For advice and support in quitting, contact your GP or the free NHS stop smoking helpline on 0800 169 0 169

Addenbrooke's Hospital Outpatient Physiotherapy

Patient Information

Management of acute injuries (sprains and strains) PRICE guidelines

Document history

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Most soft tissue injuries will heal with self management. If severe pain or swelling persists for more than one week, contact your GP.

PRICE guidelines

Protection

You may need to protect the injured area to prevent further pain or injury by wearing or using a support, for example using a sling for an arm injury or crutches to protect a leg injury.

As the injury heals, gradually reduce the support you are giving the area. Your physiotherapist or GP can advise you on this.

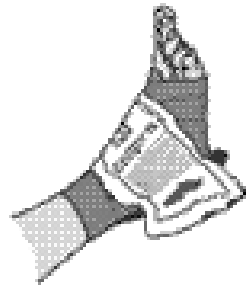


Rest

It is important to rest the injured area during the early phases of healing. This prevents the area being stressed during the first 24 to 48 hours. As pain decreases, gentle movement of the area can begin. When you first start moving again, avoid excessive movement which may stress the area.

Ice

Applying ice immediately following injury can help reduce swelling and pain. Use a bag of frozen peas or crushed ice wrapped in a damp towel for 10 to 15 minutes. You can repeat every two hours until the pain and swelling subsides. Unwrapped ice for longer than 20 minutes can cause burns so be careful. If you have altered sensation or circulation, for example Raynaud's syndrome, consult your physiotherapist before using ice.



Compression

This means applying a supportive bandage and is best done as soon as possible after the injury to reduce swelling. Tubigrip is most commonly used and can be bought from a chemist. Make sure the support is not too tight or it may interfere with blood circulation to the area. Check that areas furthest away (like fingers and toes) are showing no signs of lack of circulation like changes of colour, tingling or numbness. Remove all compression at night.



Elevation

Raising the injured area above the heart can help reduce swelling and is best done as soon as possible after the injury. Make sure the area is safely supported on pillows. Do not use compression and elevation at the same time.

Pain relief

To help us optimise your treatment, it is important that you have adequate pain relief. If you are suffering high levels of pain please seek advice from your pharmacist or GP.

Further advice

Please be aware that this handout is to be used as a guide.

Contacts

Please contact our reception on 01223 216633 to leave a message for your physiotherapist or to enquire about appointments.

This information has been compiled by the Physiotherapy team at Addenbrooke's Hospital. You may receive this information during an appointment with a physiotherapist, from your GP or via our website at www.cuh.org.uk/outpatient-physio