

Sprains and Strains

Emergency Department

The prevention of infection is a major priority in all healthcare and everyone has a part to play.

- Please decontaminate your hands frequently for 20 seconds using soap and water or alcohol gel if available
- If you have symptoms of diarrhoea and/or vomiting, cough or other respiratory symptoms, a temperature or any loss of taste or smell please do not visit the hospital or any other care facility and seek advice from 111
- Keep the environment clean and tidy
- Let's work together to keep infections out of our hospitals and care homes.

Introduction

This leaflet is intended to help you understand about your injury and what to do while you recover.

What is a sprain?

A sprain occurs when ligaments get damaged. Ligaments are bands of tissue which connect and support the bones in a joint. These injuries can be quite minor affecting a small number of the ligaments or quite severe when there is damage to a lot of the supporting ligaments.

How will a sprain or strain be diagnosed?

These injuries are often diagnosed by clinical examination alone. If the clinician is not sure if there is a fracture, an X-ray is requested. Occasionally other tests are requested.

What is a strain?

A strain occurs when a muscle is damaged by fibres being torn. How serious this is depends on the amount of damage to the muscle.

What will happen if I have a sprain or strain?

The area injured will become swollen and bruised. The swelling usually increases for the first 48 hours. The area may be painful for several weeks but you should see gradual improvement. If you are concerned about the injury please either return to the emergency department or see your GP.

What can I do to help myself get better?

You should:

- If you are provided with a splint, the clinician will let you how long to wear it for and when to remove it
- Relieve the pain by taking painkillers such as ibuprofen or paracetamol (both available from a local chemist)
- Never put the ice directly onto your skin. Use some cloth such as a tea towel between the ice pack and your skin. Leave it in place for about 10 to 20 minutes. Repeat this every couple of hours

- Do some gentle exercise to your injured area to stop it becoming stiff
- Visit your GP if the pain does not get any better and we have not arranged to see you again
- Physiotherapy is available at the hospital. We have leaflets available which allow you to refer yourself for physiotherapy. Please ask if you think this would help you
- If you have a strain to a muscle, it is important you do stretching exercises to regain the full muscle length before returning to full sporting activity. Otherwise you are likely to re-tear the muscle. Advice will be provided by the Clinician treating you on the day
- If the affected area feels hot to the touch with a raised red rash, you must return to the Emergency Department

What should I avoid doing?

- Wear the supporting splint at night
- Wear the supporting splint if it is too tight

If the circulation does not return to normal when you remove the splint or bandage, you must return to the Emergency Department.

Where can I get more information?

www.nhs.uk/conditions/sprains-and-strains

English

If you need information in another way like easy read or a different language please let us know.

If you need an interpreter or assistance please let us know.

Lithuanian

Jeigu norėtumėte, kad informacija jums būtų pateikta kitu būdu, pavyzdžiui, supaprastinta forma ar kita kalba, prašome mums apie tai pranešti.

Jeigu jums reikia vertėjo ar kitos pagalbos, prašome mums apie tai pranešti.

Polish

Jeżeli chcieliby Państwo otrzymać te informacje w innej postaci, na przykład w wersji łatwej do czytania lub w innym języku, prosimy powiedzieć nam o tym.

Prosimy poinformować nas również, jeżeli potrzebowaliby Państwo usługi tłumaczenia ustnego lub innej pomocy.

Punjabi

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ, ਜਿਵੇਂ ਪੜ੍ਹਨ ਵਿਚ ਆਸਾਨ ਰੂਪ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਦੂਜੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ, ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਦੁਭਾਸ਼ੀਏ ਦੀ ਜਾਂ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

Romanian

Dacă aveți nevoie de informații în alt format, ca de exemplu caractere ușor de citit sau altă limbă, vă rugăm să ne informați.

Dacă aveți nevoie de un interpret sau de asistență, vă rugăm să ne informați.

Traditional Chinese

如果您需要以其他方式了解信息，如易读或其他语种，请告诉我们。

如果您需要口译人员或帮助，请告诉我们。