

Sprains

You have been diagnosed in the Emergency Department as suffering from a sprain. This leaflet explains how to care for your sprain at home.

What is a sprain?

Sprains are painful injuries to the joints resulting in the partial or complete tearing of ligaments.

Discharge advice

- For the first 24 hours, keep the injured limb raised on two pillows while lying down.
- Apply ice bags about every 2 hours for 20 to 30 minutes, while awake, to the injured area for the first 24 hours. Then continue as advised by the Emergency Department doctor or nurse. Place the ice or frozen peas in a plastic bag with a towel around it to prevent frostbite to the skin.
- You may take Paracetamol every 6 hours or Ibuprofen every 8 hours for pain or discomfort. Paracetamol and Ibuprofen may be taken together in normal dosages. You may take other pain medicine as prescribed by your doctor or emergency nurse practitioner. Talk to your GP if you are concerned about taking painkillers.
- If a bandage (stretchy, tubigrip or elastic wrapping bandage) has been applied today, remove and reapply every 3 to 4 hours. Apply firm enough to keep swelling down. Do not apply tightly, and remove at night.

What to look out for

- A hairline fracture (this is the same as a broken bone) may not show on initial x-rays. X-rays may sometimes not show a small fracture until a week or ten days later.
- Persistent pain and inability to use the injured area for more than 2 to 3 days are warning signs. See your GP for a follow-up visit as soon as possible if you are worried.
- Persistent pain and swelling indicate that you should be seen for further evaluation and/or more x-rays. A radiologist (a specialist in reading x-rays) will re-read your x-rays and you will be contacted if the radiologist adds more information.

Tell us your views

If you wish to discuss any aspect of your treatment and care, please speak to a senior member of staff or to the nurse looking after you. The matrons are also available during normal working hours and they welcome your views.

You can also pick up a copy of the Trust leaflet called 'Talk to us', which explains how you can raise concerns or give feedback on your experience at the hospital.

Friends and Family Test

Whatever your experience you can give feedback by answering the Friends & Family test question – *How likely are you to recommend our service to family and friends if they needed similar care or treatment?* - by going online www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk/get-in-touch/friends-and-family-survey.htm.

Further information

More information is available on the Trust website:

www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

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Emergency Department

December 2017

Review due: December 2019