

Fracture Clinic Patient Information Leaflet

Advice after a soft tissue injury

Your injury

A 'soft tissue' injury means that you have damaged some of the structures that support your bones and joints but you do not have any broken bones. This is a common injury.

The usual symptoms following this type of injury include:

- Pain straight after an injury
- Swelling
- Bruising
- Difficulty moving the injured part

Your treatment plan

You should try to rest the injured area for a short period of time whilst the symptoms settle. You may be given a sling, splint or boot to help support the area initially - wear this during the day but remove it for exercises and personal hygiene. You can wear it at night time if you find it more comfortable but you don't have to.

As your pain improves, you will be able to move more comfortably. These injuries almost always heal well with time and therefore follow up clinic appointments are not always needed.

What should I do at home?

- Use over the counter pain killers as required.
- Elevate the area on pillows at rest

- Use ice over the injured area to help with pain and swelling – an ice pack or a bag of frozen peas wrapped in a tea towel can be used for 10 minutes at a time.
- You should not drive whilst in a sling, splint or boot
- You can return to work or school once you are able to do your normal duties.

How long will it take to heal?

Most soft tissue injuries heal without any problems in about six weeks. However, it may take a few months for your symptoms to settle – these can include pain or discomfort, stiffness, decreased strength, and swelling. The injury may take longer to heal if you suffer from diabetes or if you smoke.

For advice on stopping smoking please visit www.nhs.uk/smokefree or discuss this with your GP.

On some occasions people might be referred to their local physiotherapy department for assessment, advice and rehabilitation.

Exercises

You should try to gently move the injured part of your body through its normal range of movement three to four times a day. You can start this immediately. This might be uncomfortable to begin with but it will help your recovery.

If you have any worries or concerns please contact one of the following:

Virtual Fracture Clinic Helpline 01225 821668 or Fracture Clinic 01225 825602

Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust
Combe Park, Bath BA1 3NG
01225 428331 www.ruh.nhs.uk

Please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) if you require this leaflet in a different format, or would like to feedback your experience of the hospital. Email ruh-tr.PatientAdviceandLiaisonService@nhs.net or telephone 01225 825656 or 826319