

Wrist Sprain

Information for patients

This booklet provides information for patients with wrist sprain.

Physiotherapy

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What is a sprain?

- A wrist sprain is a common injury to the soft tissue in the wrist and surrounding area, often pain can be felt in the forearm and hand.
- It can be caused by trauma, such as falling onto the hand, or through overuse or repetitive strain.
- The ligaments and muscles can become irritated resulting in pain and inflammation.

What are the symptoms?

- Pain
- Swelling
- Bruising
- Reduced movement and stiffness.

How long will it take to recover?

- The initial pain usually settles after a few days and during this time it is important to follow the simple treatment advice in this leaflet to ensure a good recovery.
 - The soft tissues (muscles and ligaments) normally take around six weeks to heal; this timeframe may vary as everyone recovers from injuries at different rates.
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What treatments can I use?

Pain Killers

- If your GP has prescribed pain killers, then these should be taken at the recommended dose.

Cold Packs

- A cold pack (ice pack or frozen peas wrapped in a damp towel) can also provide short-term pain relief. Apply to the sore area for up to 15 minutes, every few hours.

Rest

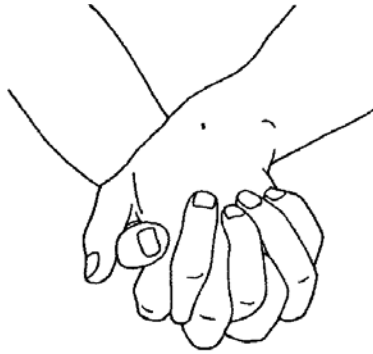
- Try to rest the wrist for the first 24-72 hours. However, it is important to maintain flexibility in the wrist so you can gently move it without causing too much pain. This will ensure your wrist does not become too stiff and it will help the healing process.

Early Movement and Exercise

- In the early stages it is best to avoid the activities that aggravate the pain. However, it is important to keep the wrist moving fully to prevent stiffness.
 - Do not rest for long periods at a time as this will lead to stiffness and weakness and prolong your recovery.
 - Simple, graded exercises can be performed to help gain full function of your wrist and hand.
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Exercises for your wrist

Clasp your hands together and support your forearms on a table. Put the back of one hand on the table and then turn your hands and put the back of the other hand on the table.



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2. Clasp your hands together and support your forearms on a table with your hands over the edge. Move your wrists from side to side (up and down).



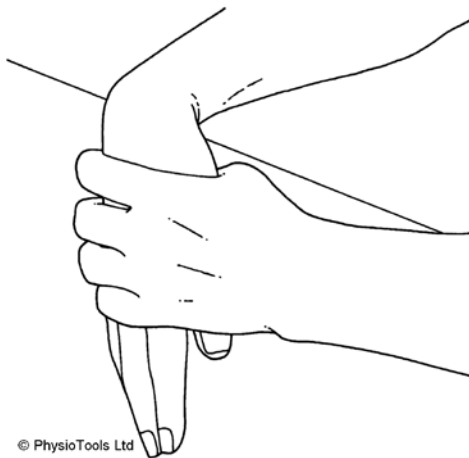
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3. Place your forearms horizontally in-front of you and palms together. Push palms together for 5 seconds then relax.



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4. Support your forearm on a table, with your hand over the edge and your palm facing down. Gently stretch your hand downwards feeling a stretch in the top of your forearm. Hold for 10 seconds.



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Please note: these exercises should not increase your pain. Perform each exercise gently and slowly, only moving as far as feels comfortable. Practice each exercise up to 10 times, 2-3 times a day.

What should I do if the pain increases with exercise?

If your pain increases, initially reduce your activity levels. As your wrist starts to feel better you can gradually start exercising again.

However, if your pain increases significantly stop the exercises and consult your GP or physiotherapist before continuing.

General Advice

- The sooner you commence early exercise, the better your recovery.
 - Use your hand gently for light activities (e.g. washing, dressing, eating, writing)
 - Keep your wrist and hand gently moving, but avoid activities that aggravate your pain.
 - If your symptoms get worse, or do not improve please seek further medical advice.
 - Don't keep your wrist still, it will get stiff and healing will take longer.
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Disclaimer

The information in this leaflet is for guidance purposes only and is in no way intended to replace professional clinical advice by a qualified practitioner.

Further information and advice can be obtained from:

List any appropriate support groups/telephone/web/email addresses.

NHS Direct
NHS Direct online






 0845 46 47
www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk

MTW NHS Trust is committed to making its patient information accessible in a range of languages and formats. If you need this leaflet in another language or format please ask one of your clinical care team or the PALS Team. We will do our best to arrange this.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

If you would like to raise any concerns, make comments and suggestions or require information on Trust services, you can contact **PALS**. Office opening times are Monday to Friday 10.00am to 4.00pm. Both offices offer a 24 hour answering machine. Messages will be responded to within one working day, so please do leave a contact number.

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