

Acute Injury Management

Information for patients

Virtual Fracture Care Team: Shared care plan

Virtual Fracture Clinic
Tunbridge Wells Hospital
Tonbridge Road
Pembury
TN2 4QJ
☎ 01892 638450
e-mail: mtw-tr.fracturecare@nhs.net

Following a traumatic injury it is normal to sustain injury to the soft tissues resulting in swelling, bruising and pain. This leaflet is intended to provide simple self-management techniques in how to ease your symptoms.

If you have any further questions after reading this please do not hesitate to contact the Virtual Fracture Care Team.

Swelling & Pain

Part of the body's normal response to injury is pain and swelling. Follow the simple steps below to manage your symptoms.

- **Ice:** Ice is a great natural anaesthetic that helps relieve pain and controls swelling. Apply ice packs or a bag of frozen peas wrapped in a thin towel to the site of the injury. Do not apply ice directly to the skin. Do not leave the ice pack on for more than 20 minutes at a time in one hour. Repeat as much as required. You may find it helps to apply ice before and after completing your exercises.
- **Elevation:** It is normal to experience swelling post injury. Elevation reduces swelling, which in turn relieves pain and speeds up your healing. Keep your injured limb elevated as much as possible during the first 72 hours. Remember to keep your joints moving if able and as pain allows to prevent stiffness.
- **Medication:** The A&E doctor may have prescribed you with some pain relief. Take this medication as instructed to help manage and control the pain. If you do not feel that this medication is helping consider talking to a pharmacist or your GP to see if there is an alternative option.

Driving

If you have an injury to your lower limb, you can return to driving when you no longer require the orthopaedic boot or crutches and are confident that you are able to do an emergency stop.

If you have an upper limb injury, you can begin driving when you are no longer using your sling and when you have sufficient pain-free strength in your arms.

If you have a follow up appointment with us please wait until your consultant has given you clearance to drive. If you are in any doubt, do not drive until you have spoken to our team.

Work and Sport

Decisions to return to work are made on a unique basis and should be discussed with either the Virtual Fracture Clinic Team or your GP and your employer. You may require a period of time off work and when you return you may need light or amended duties. The advice given will depend on your profession and your injury.

Advice regarding return to sport will be given during your telephone consultation.


Smoking cessation

Medical evidence suggests that smoking prolongs fracture healing time. In extreme cases it can stop healing altogether. It is important that you consider this information in relation to your recent injury. Stopping smoking during the healing phase of a fracture will help ensure optimal recovery from this injury.

For advice on smoking cessation and local support available, please discuss this with your GP or refer to the NHS Smoke Free website.


Further information and advice can be obtained from:

NHS 111
NHS Choices online

 111
www.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 Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS). We will do our best to arrange this.

Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust welcomes all forms of feedback from our service users. If the standard of service you have received from the Trust does not meet your expectations, we want to hear from you. Please speak with the ward manager or the nurse in charge in the first instance, or you can contact the **Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)** on:

Telephone:  01622 224960 or  01892 632953

Email: mtw-tr.palsoffice@nhs.net

or visit their office at either Maidstone or Tunbridge Wells Hospital between 9.00am and 5.00pm, Monday to Friday.

You can be confident that your care will not be affected by highlighting any areas of concern or making a complaint. The Trust will retain a record of your contact, which is held separately to any medical records. If you are acting on behalf of a patient, we may need to obtain the patient's consent in order to protect patient confidentiality. More information on PALS or making a complaint can be found on the Trust's website: www.mtw.nhs.uk or pick up a leaflet from main reception.

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