

# Chest Injury

An information guide



# Chest Injury

This leaflet contains discharge advice following your attendance to the Accident & Emergency Department (A&E) or Urgent Treatment Centre (UTC).

You have suffered an injury to your chest, which has caused bruising to the ribs and chest wall muscles. It is possible that you have broken 1 or 2 ribs.

A chest x-ray is not always necessary in this situation, as broken ribs do not always show up on an x-ray, and the treatment is the same whether ribs are broken or not. The pain from this type of injury will be worse on taking a deep breath, coughing, and on movement.

You should take regular simple painkillers, such as paracetamol, and anti-inflammatories, such as ibuprofen (unless you are unable to take these for other reasons). These can be bought over the counter from a pharmacy.

The recovery time from these injuries will vary from a few days (for a simple bruise) up to 4 – 6 weeks (for broken ribs).

## Breathing exercises

Although deep breathing may make the pain worse, it is important that you do regular breathing exercises. These will reduce the risk of you developing a chest infection. To perform breathing exercises you should:

- Take a slow deep breath in, hold it for 5 seconds, and then slowly breathe out
- It may help to support the injured area with your hand while doing this
- You should do these exercises for up to 5 minutes every hour

It is also important that you cough up any phlegm (sputum) that develops. Again it may help if you support the injured area with your hand while coughing.

### **Smoking**

If you smoke, you should make every effort to stop. Smoking will add to the phlegm produced by your lungs, and increase the chances of you getting a chest infection.

### **What to look out for**

You should contact/return to the A&E Department/ UTC you attended or visit your GP if you develop any of the following symptoms:

Increasing shortness of breath

- Coughing up blood
- Coughing up yellow or green phlegm
- Change in the nature of pain
- Worsening pain
- Unexplained fever

**A&E Department:**

**Fairfield General Hospital– 0161 778 2600**

**If English is not your first language and you need help, please contact the Interpretation and Translation Service**

Jeśli angielski nie jest twoim pierwszym językiem i potrzebujesz pomocy, skontaktuj się z działem tłumaczeń ustnych i pisemnych

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Dacă engleza nu este prima ta limbă și ai nevoie de ajutor, te rugăm să contactezi Serviciul de interpretare și traducere

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For advice on stopping smoking contact the Specialist Stop Smoking Service on 01706 517 522

**For general enquiries please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 0161 604 5897**


**For enquiries regarding clinic appointments, clinical care and treatment please contact 0161 624 0420 and the Switchboard Operator will put you through to the correct department / service**

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