Wrist Pain (Sprain-Strain)

Wrist injuries are frequent in adults and children. A ***sprain*** is an injury to the ligaments that hold your bones together. A ***strain*** is an injury to muscle or muscle cord like structures (*tendons*) from stretching or pulling. Generally, when wrists are moderately tender to touch following a fall or injury, a break in the bone (*fracture*) may often be present.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- Apply ice to the injury for 20 minutes each hour while awake for the first 2 days. Put the ice in a plastic bag and place a towel between the bag of ice and your skin.
- Keep your arm raised above the level of your heart whenever possible to reduce swelling and pain.
- Avoid using your injured extremity as long as pain is still present.
- If a splint or ace bandage has been applied, use it as directed or until seen by a caregiver for a follow-up examination.
- Only take over-the-counter or prescription medicines for pain, discomfort, or fever as directed by your caregiver.

SEEK MEDICAL CARE IF:

- You have increased pain or swelling.
- Your fingers are colder than those on your other hand.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- Your fingers are swollen very red, white, and cold or blue.
- Your fingers are numb or tingling.
- You have increasing pain or difficulty moving your fingers.

Remember the importance of follow-up and possible follow-up x-rays. Improvement in pain level is not a guarantee that you did not fracture a bone in your wrist. The only way to determine whether or not you have broken a bone is by x-ray.

MAKE SURE YOU:

- Understand these instructions.
- Will watch your condition.
- Will get help right away if you are not doing well or get worse.

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