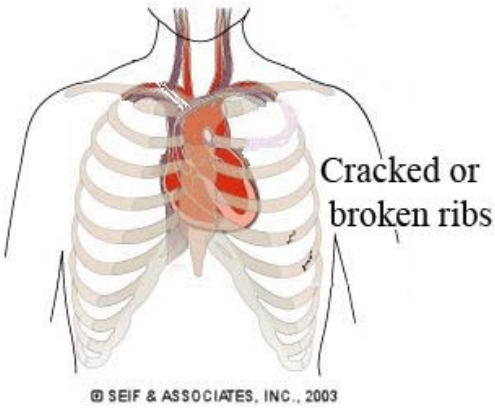
Broken or Cracked Rib

The ribs are like a cage that goes around your upper chest. The ribs protect your lungs. Your ribs move when you breathe, so it hurts if a rib is broken.

HOME CARE



- Learn the best way to breathe to keep the lungs healthy:
  - Place one hand on the chest and one hand on the belly.
  - Breathe in slowly and deeply.
  - The hand on the chest should not move. The hand on the belly should move out as the lungs fill with air.
  - Hold for 3 seconds.
  - Relax and let the air out.
- Take at least 3 to 4 deep breaths like this every hour while awake. This will help keep the lungs open and healthy.
- If you or your child needs to cough, put one or both hands over the place that hurts.
  - If you or your child cannot reach the sore place with the hands, you may use a pillow or lean on something soft instead.
- Avoid using a rib belt or binder (*wide bandage*) on the chest. Rib belts or binders do not allow you to breathe deeply. Lung infection (*pneumonia*) may develop if you or your child is not breathing deeply.
- **Only take medicine as told by your doctor.**

GET HELP RIGHT AWAY IF:

- You or your child has a hard time breathing.
- Pain in the chest gets worse.
- You or your child cannot stop coughing or coughs up bloody mucus.
- You or your child has a temperature by mouth above 102° F (38.9° C), not controlled by medicine.
- Your baby is older than 3 months with a rectal temperature of 102º F (38.9º C) or higher.
- **Your baby is 3 months old or younger with a rectal temperature of 100.4º F (38º C) or higher.**

MAKE SURE YOU:

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

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