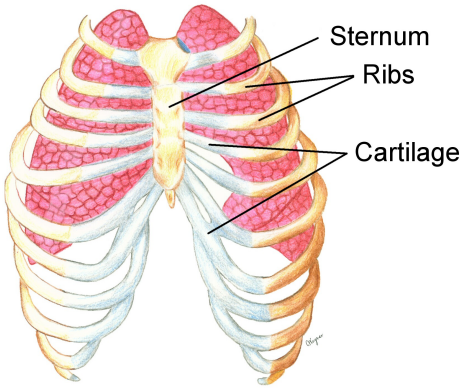
Costochondritis
(Costochondral Separation / Tietze Syndrome)

Costochondritis (Tietze syndrome), or costochondral separation, is a swelling and irritation (*inflammation*) of the tissue (*cartilage*) that connects your ribs with your breastbone (*sternum*). It may occur on its own *(spontaneously*), through damage caused by an accident (*trauma*), or simply from coughing or minor exercise. It may take up to 6 weeks to get better and longer if you are unable to be conservative in your activities.



HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- Avoid exhausting physical activity. Try not to strain your ribs during normal activity. This would include any activities using chest, belly *(abdominal*) and side muscles, especially if heavy weights are used.
- Use ice for 15 to 20 minutes per hour while awake for the first 2 days. Place the ice in a plastic bag, and place a towel between the bag of ice and your skin.
- Only take over-the-counter or prescription medicines for pain, discomfort, or fever as directed by your caregiver.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- Your pain increases or you are very uncomfortable.
- An oral temperature above 102° F (38.9° C) develops, or as your caregiver suggests.
- You develop difficulty with your breathing.
- You cough up blood.
- You develop worse chest pains, shortness of breath, sweating, or vomiting.
- You develop new, unexplained problems *(symptoms*).

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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