Rib Belt

Your caregiver has given you a rib belt to help control the pain from a chest injury. This belt gives gentle support to the injured area. It also helps reduce chest motion. To apply your rib belt, place it across your back and stretch the ends out and forward across your rib cage. Press the Velcro areas together when there is a gentle pressure on the chest wall. Do not make the rib belt too tight in order to breathe comfortably.

If you are older or have lung disease, rib belts can increase the risk of getting pneumonia after a chest injury. You must be sure to breathe deeply and cough several times every hour to keep your lungs clear. **Do not** use a rib belt if it does not help relieve your pain. Take it off at night when you go to bed. Most rib belts can be washed by machine and hung dry.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF :

- You develop *purulent* (pus like) sputum or an uncontrolled cough.
- You begin coughing up blood.
- You develop pain which is getting worse or is uncontrolled with medications.
- You develop an oral temperature above 102º F (38.9º C) after not having a temperature for one or more days.
- **Any of the symptoms which brought you in for treatment are getting worse rather than better, or you develop shortness of breath or chest pain. Dial 911 for immediate emergency care.**

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