



**Northumbria Healthcare**  
NHS Foundation Trust

# Wrist injuries

Issued by the walk-in services and minor injury units



This leaflet is to give you information after your wrist injury.

## What goes wrong?

There are many causes of pain and stiffness that can affect your wrist and hand. The most common are arthritis and following trauma.

## Alternatives/ options for treatment

### Painkillers

Simple pain killers or anti – inflammatory tablets/cream can be helpful, please seek advice from a pharmacist or GP.

### Ice packs

Ice packs help to reduce inflammation during the early stages following an injury, it cools the area down and reduces swelling.

- Use a bag of frozen peas or crushed ice cubes placed in a plastic bag.
- Protect your skin from ice burns with a damp flannel or cloth. Place your cold pack on top of the painful area and wrap a towel around to hold it in place. Never apply ice directly to the skin as this may result in an ice burn.
- Ice packs can be applied two or three times per day for 20 minutes, leave two hours between applications.

By following this advice your symptoms should improve. If they do not improve you should seek advice from your GP or physiotherapist.

## Heat packs

Alternatively, heat packs may help to soothe pain or relieve stiffness in a long-standing problem.

Use a warm towel or hot water bottle wrapped in a towel. Place on the affected area and leave for approximately ten minutes.

Repeat every two hours as needed (ensure the bottle is not scalding hot). Care must be taken on all areas of the body with loss of feeling.

## Exercises

Gentle exercises help return joints to their normal function and prevent further injuries.

Exercises should be performed regularly throughout the day.

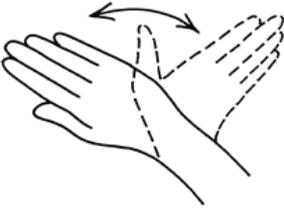
Stretches are slow sustained exercises performed within the limits of pain. Stretches help to increase flexibility and are best performed after you have warmed up. Try starting with five repetitions for each exercise and slowly increase duration.



Bend your wrist downwards and hold for 10 seconds



Bend your wrist upwards and hold for 10 seconds



Move your wrist from side to side

You should repeat each exercises approximately five times per hour and gradually increase as the pain decreases.

## Contact

Should you have any questions or queries please ring 0844 811 8111 and ask for one of the following:

A&E Reception, Wansbeck General Hospital  
(Open from 8am to 10pm)

A&E Reception, North Tyneside General Hospital  
(Open from 8am to Midnight)

A&E Reception, Hexham Children's Unit, Wansbeck  
(Open from 8am to 10pm)

Alnwick Minor Injury Unit (Open 24hours)

Berwick Minor Injury Unit (Open 24 hours)

Blyth Minor Injury Unit (Open from 8am to 5pm, Monday to Friday)

You can call NHS 111 for urgent medical advice 24/7.







## **Alternative Formats**

If you would like a copy of this information in large print, another language, audio tape or other format please call the Contact Centre on **03 44 811 8118**

## **Other sources of information**

### **NHS 111**

### **NHS Choices**

[www.nhs.uk/pages/homepage.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/pages/homepage.aspx)

### **NICE (National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence)**

[www.nice.org.uk](http://www.nice.org.uk)

### **Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)**

Freephone: **0800 032 0202**

Text: 01670 511098

Email: [northoftynepals@nhct.nhs.uk](mailto:northoftynepals@nhct.nhs.uk)

### **Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust**

General Enquiries **03 44 811 8111**

[www.northumbria.nhs.uk](http://www.northumbria.nhs.uk)

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