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AND MINOR INJURY UNITS**
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HAND/WRIST SPRAIN

A sprain means that you have an injury to some of the soft tissues that support a joint, such as ligaments. This is a common injury. Symptoms include: pain, swelling, bruising and difficulty moving the wrist and hand. Getting back to normal activity after injury requires the pain and swelling to settle, the hand/wrist to be mobilised and to perform strengthening exercises.

Initial Management

- **Rest** – gradually increase activity as pain/swelling subside
- **Ice** – apply ice pack as soon as possible after an injury to reduce pain/swelling over the first 48h. Do this for 10-15mins every 3-4h.
- **Compression** - You may be given a removable splint. Use this for 2 - 6 weeks to enable you to use the arm more comfortably whilst the injury heals. You only need to wear the splint when using the arm. You can remove it at rest, at night and when bathing or showering. You can use the arm for light activities immediately and gradually increase how much you are using it as the pain settles down and the symptoms ease off.
- **Elevation** – over the first 48h, elevate the wrist where possible
- **Early mobilisation** – it is important to start moving your wrist as soon as possible to prevent stiffness and regain function. You will not damage it further with gentle exercises.
- **Medication** – pain killers, e.g. paracetamol or ibuprofen, help to reduce pain and swelling

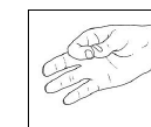
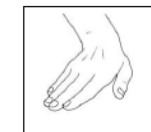
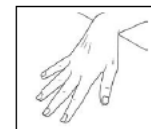


Hand/Wrist Strengthening Exercises

You should try to do these exercises three to four times a day; you can start them immediately.

Repeat these **ten times** each:

1. Forearm supported on a table with your hand relaxed over the edge and palm facing down. Lift the wrist and return to starting position.
2. Forearm supported on a table with your hand relaxed over the edge and palm facing down. Bend the wrist down and lift to return to starting position.
3. Hold your wrist and fingers straight. Move your wrist in the direction of your little finger and then in the direction of your thumb.
4. Forearm on a table, palm turned down. Alternately turn palm over and return to starting position keeping your elbow still.
5. With your thumb touch the tip of each finger



Physiotherapy



If your pain is affecting your activity and persisting, you can ask your GP to refer you to a physiotherapist, or you can refer yourself directly.

You can also download “**NHS 24 MSK**” App on your phone for exercises and advice. This resource is free of charge.

