

If you require further advice
or are not sure then
please contact your GP
or phone 111



Mersey and West Lancashire
Teaching Hospitals
NHS Trust

Rib Injury

If you need this leaflet in a different language or accessible format
please speak to a member of staff who can arrange it for you.

اگر به این بروشور به زبان دیگر یا در قالب دسترس پذیر نیاز دارید،
لطفاً با یکی از کارکنان صحبت کنید تا آن را برای شما تهیه کند.

Jeśli niniejsza ulotka ma być dostępna w innym języku lub formacie,
proszę skontaktować się z członkiem personelu, który ją dla Państwa przygotowuje.

Dacă aveți nevoie de această broșură într-o altă limbă sau într-un format accesibil,
vă rog să discutați cu un membru al personalului să se ocupe
de acest lucru pentru dumneavoastră

如果您需要本传单的其他语言版本或无障碍格式，请联系工作人员为您安排。

إذا احتجت إلى هذه النشرة بلغة أخرى، أو بتنسيق
يسهل الوصول إليه، يرجى التحدث إلى أحد الموظفين لترتيب ذلك لك.

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Rib Injuries

The doctor/practitioner that you have seen has diagnosed that you have injured your rib(s).

They usually take several weeks to heal.

If the rib is broken this can be 6 to 8 weeks.

Pain will be worse as you breathe in. This is because the rib cage moves with breathing.

It is important to follow the breathing exercises outlined later in this leaflet to avoid getting a chest infection.

We do not usually x-ray chests to look for rib fractures:

- Fractures can be difficult to see.
- X-ray's carry a radiation risk.

If we do perform an x-ray it is to look at the lungs underlying the rib cage.

How to Help Yourself

You need to take regular painkillers, at least for the first couple of weeks.

If you wait until the pain is bad the pain killer will be less effective. **Regular is better.**

You can hold an ice pack e.g. frozen peas in a tea towel, to the affected ribs regularly as this is a good pain killer and will help reduce any swelling.

Breathe normally and cough when you need.

Sleeping more upright may be more comfortable.

Do not lie down or stay still for long periods of time.

Do not lift heavy objects.

Do not drive until you can do an emergency stop pain-free.

Breathing Exercises

Repeat hourly throughout the day.

Loosen any tight clothing.

1. Lie comfortably on your uninjured side.
2. Take as deep a breath as you can.
3. Do this 3 times and then rest for a few minutes.
4. Repeat.

If lying down is uncomfortable, do the following sitting in a chair.

1. Wrap a towel or sheet around your chest, cross over at the front, and pull to support your ribs.
2. Do the breathing exercises above.