

Managing Sprains and Strains



Injuries to muscles, tendons, and ligaments occur frequently and range in severity. The initial pain and swelling from a mild to moderate sprain or strain should subside in a few days, but full recovery may take weeks or months.

First 48 Hours: Reduce Swelling

- Rest:** Avoid using or putting weight on the injured area. Reduce your regular exercise and activities of daily living.
- Ice:** Apply a cold pack or bag of ice to the injured area for 20 minutes at a time every 2 to 4 hours.
 - Avoid frostbite by placing a towel between the ice and your skin.
- Elevation:** When possible, use a pillow to keep the injured area at or above the level of your heart.

First Week: Treat Pain

- Diclofenac Topical Gel 1% (Voltaren Arthritis Pain*)**
Use dosing card to measure and apply ____ grams topically to affected area every _____ hrs as needed
- Ibuprofen 200 mg (May be store brand, Advil, or Motrin)**
Take ____ tablet(s) by mouth every _____ hrs as needed
- Naproxen 220 mg (May be store brand or Aleve)**
Take ____ tablet(s) by mouth every _____ hrs as needed
- OR**
- Acetaminophen 325 mg (May be store brand or Tylenol)**
Take ____ tablet(s) by mouth every _____ hrs as needed
 - Ask your pharmacist to help you select the correct product.
 - Read the *Drug Facts* label on each pain relief product to ensure you do not exceed the maximum daily dose.

Long Term: Recover Full Function

- Graduated Exercise:** Your doctor will help you develop a plan to gradually increase your activity to prevent stiffness, improve range of motion, and restore flexibility and strength.
- Physical Therapy:** Some injuries require focused rehabilitation. Our office can help you with a referral.

Call us at _____ if you have questions or concerns about your injury recovery plan.

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