



 Please call 911 if you think you have a medical emergency.

Knee Injury Treatment

Self-Care at Home

Home care for knee injuries is similar for both a sprain and a fracture. If you suspect a fracture, however, seek immediate care from your doctor or emergency department. Home care, which you can do until medical care arrives, includes the following:

- Rest: Stay off the injured knee so you do not injure it further. Certain damage could require you to have a knee joint replacement.
- Elevate: Keep the injured knee elevated to decrease swelling and knee pain.
- Ice compresses: Apply ice packs for 15-20 minutes at a time, 4 times a day, to keep swelling and pain down. Do not put ice directly on your skin. Wrap the ice pack in a towel.
- Pain relief
 - Ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil) or naproxen (Aleve, Naprosyn) is ideal for knee injuries because they reduce both pain and inflammation. Follow the directions on the label or your doctor's instructions.
 - You also can use acetaminophen (Tylenol) if you cannot tolerate the others.

Medical Treatment

- Doctors will splint any broken bones seen on the X-rays.
 - You may be sent to an orthopedic surgeon for evaluation.
 - Depending on the severity of the break, you may need surgery to keep your knee's structures in line.
- More common, however, the x-rays don't show a fracture. Then the concern will be injury to either your ligaments or knee cartilage.
 - If your knee is too swollen or painful, your doctor may not be able to obtain a good examination.
 - Your knee will be placed in an immobilizer and you will be given a follow-up appointment, either with your doctor or an orthopedic doctor.

- Depending upon a number of factors, your doctor may want to "tap" the knee (place a needle through the skin into the joint space) to remove fluid. This may help in arriving at a diagnosis and may make you feel better.
- Once the swelling and pain have improved, doctors can test the ligaments and cartilage for sprains or tears.
 - Depending on the degree of sprain or tear your doctor suspects, you will be referred to physical therapy for rehabilitation or to an orthopedic surgeon for possible surgery.
 - If your sprain is minor, you may just need to rest the knee and go without rehabilitation.
- Depending on how much pain you have, your doctor may give you prescription strength pain medication. Often anti-inflammatory pain medications, such as ibuprofen or naproxen, are used to decrease swelling and control pain.
 - Use these only as needed.
 - Do not drive or operate heavy machinery while you are using prescription strength medications such as narcotics.

more information from eMedicineHealth

- [When to Seek Medical Care](#)
- [Exams and Tests](#)
- [Next Steps](#)
- [Prevention](#)
- [Outlook](#)

For more information, read the complete article, Knee Injury

(<http://www.emedicinehealth.com/script/main/art.asp?articlekey=59244>) on <http://www.emedicinehealth.com>.

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