

How to treat sprains and strains

A sprain occurs when one or more of your ligaments have been stretched, twisted or torn. A strain occurs when the muscle fibres stretch or tear. You can treat most sprains and strains at home and your symptoms should improve in a few days:

- Protect the affected area by supporting it, for example by resting a sprained ankle on a cushion.
- Rest up as much as possible to take pressure off the injury.
- Use an ice pack for 20 minutes every 2-3 hours, use a tea towel to stop the ice being in direct contact with skin.
- Once the swelling has started to go down, use a bandage to compress the area and provide further support.
- Elevate the affected area by raising above the level of your heart, for example by lying down and raising an injured leg with cushions.
- For painful sprains or strains, paracetamol is usually recommended and your local pharmacy can give advice.

Most injuries will heal within a few days. If you are still experiencing symptoms or the pain is getting worse, please call NHS 111 or your GP for advice.



when it's less
urgent than 999

NHS 111 is a free 24 hour service and will give you healthcare advice or direct you to the local service that is best for you.



Too much time in the sun?

Too much sun can make you ill quickly and unexpectedly, even on seemingly cloudy days, and your skin can burn easily. Here's what you can do to protect yourself:

- Keep out of the sun between 11am and 3pm. If you have to be out in the heat, keep in the shade.
- Apply a high factor sunscreen and wear a hat and light, loose-fitting cotton clothes.
- Avoid extreme physical exertion.
- Have plenty of cold drinks, avoid excess alcohol, caffeine and hot drinks and drink water or fruit juice to rehydrate.
- Eat cold foods, particularly salads and fruit with a high water content.
- Take a cool shower or bath if you can, sprinkle water over your skin or clothing or keep a damp cloth on the back of your neck.
- Painkillers such as ibuprofen or paracetamol can help relieve pain and swelling from sore, itchy skin.

If you plan to go back out in the sun, cover your burnt skin with loose clothing and wear a high factor sunscreen to reduce further damage.

Most symptoms should clear up in a few days. If you have developed fluid-filled blisters on your burnt skin, you may need medical care. Please call NHS 111 or telephone your GP.

Sunburn can be more serious in pregnant women, children, older people and people with a serious illness or long-term condition. If a relative or child has sunburn call NHS 111 for advice.



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Treating bites and stings



Most insect bites and stings cause itching and swelling that usually clears up within a few hours - here are some handy tips to help:

- Wash with soap and water.
- Use a cold compress - such as a cool flannel - to reduce swelling.
- Place an ice pack wrapped in a towel on the swelling and try not to scratch!
- Take painkillers such as paracetamol or ibuprofen.
- Use antihistamine or mild hydrocortisone (1%) spray / cream or take an antihistamine tablet to help reduce swelling and itching.

Your local pharmacy will give you advice and recommend over-the-counter medication. If it hasn't gone away after a few days please call NHS 111.



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NHS



What to do if your child has a fever

Most children with a fever can be safely looked after at home. A fever is a temperature over 37.5°C (99.5°F). You should:

- keep offering your child a drink so they don't get dehydrated.
- keep them cool by loosening or removing layers of clothing.
- keep room temperatures to about 18°C (65°F).
- try children's paracetamol or ibuprofen - follow the instructions on the packet and don't give both types of medicine at once. Never give any aspirin to children under the age of 12.

Call NHS 111 or your GP urgently if your child:

- is under three months old and has a temperature of 38°C or above.
- is three to six months old and has a temperature of 39°C or above.
- as well as a fever, has other signs of being unwell, such as floppiness and drowsiness.

If your child's symptoms don't go away in please call NHS 111 or make an appointment with your GP.

The free 24-hour NHS 111 service can give you healthcare advice or direct you to the local service that can help you best.



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NHS



What to do if you have a cough or cold

Most coughs and colds clear up after a few days and can be treated at home. Here are some handy tips to ease the symptoms:

- Stay at home and get plenty of rest.
- Drink plenty of fluids but avoid alcohol as this can make symptoms feel worse.
- Eat a healthy low-fat, high-fibre diet.
- Try steam inhalation to loosen mucus and soothe your nose and throat.
- Salt water gargles can also help; add two teaspoons of salt to a pint of warm water. Gargle, spit out and repeat.
- Speak to your local pharmacist about over-the-counter remedies like decongestants or paracetamol or aspirin for pain relief.
- To avoid spreading infection, cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze and dispose of the tissue quickly afterwards. Clean hands regularly and thoroughly to avoid spreading or picking up any infections.

If your symptoms get worse, please call NHS 111. If you've had a cough for over three weeks please speak to your GP.



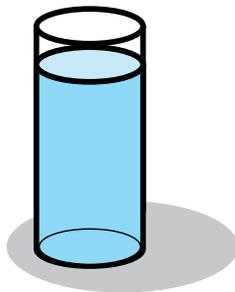
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NHS

Stay well, stay hydrated



Hot weather and lack of fluids can cause symptoms of dehydration like dizziness, dry mouth and headaches. Here are some handy tips to help you keep hydrated:

- Have plenty of cold drinks. Avoid excess alcohol, caffeine and hot drinks and drink water or fruit juice to rehydrate.
- Keep out of the sun, which is at its hottest between 11am and 3pm.
- Eat plenty of cold foods, particularly salads and fruit with a high water content.
- If you are feeling dizzy or light-headed, sit down somewhere safe and ask someone to stay with you.
- Use a rehydration solution to help to balance body fluids. See your pharmacist for advice on over-the-counter products.
- Avoid extreme physical exertion.

Babies, young children and older people are more seriously affected by dehydration. Seek advice from NHS 111 or contact your GP.

Most symptoms should clear up in a few days. If your symptoms haven't improved or are getting worse please call NHS 111 or telephone your GP.



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NHS

Got a dodgy tummy?



Sickness and diarrhoea usually clear up in three or four days. If you've got diarrhoea or have been vomiting then there are some simple steps you should take to reduce your symptoms:

- Stay at home for 48 hours or until your symptoms stop.
- Get plenty of rest and drink lots of water.
- Wash your hands after going to the toilet and before eating.
- Use your own towels - don't share with family members.
- Ask someone else to prepare family meals if possible.
- Avoid dairy products and fruit juices until your symptoms clear up.
- Only eat simple foods that are easy to digest.
- Try a rehydrating solution, which is available from pharmacies.

Your local pharmacy can advise on other over-the-counter medicines, such as pain relief, which may help to relieve your symptoms.

If your symptoms are getting worse or you have a serious illness, a long-term condition or if you are pregnant, call NHS 111 or telephone your GP.

Don't go to see your GP unless advised to by them - stomach bugs can be highly contagious and there is no treatment they can give you whilst you have it.

Sickness and diarrhoea can be more serious in older people or young children. If a relative or child is sick please call NHS 111 for advice.



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What to do when someone is drunk

Having one too many can be dangerous. If you are with someone who is drunk:

- Distract them from having any more alcohol by giving them water or soft drinks but not tea or coffee.
- Stay with them and try to keep them awake and upright.
- Keep them warm - alcohol lowers body temperature and can lead to hypothermia.
- Put them in the recovery position if they insist on lying down or pass out.
- Monitor their breathing - slow breathing can be a sign of alcohol poisoning. Slow is considered less than eight breaths per minute.

Most people will begin to sober up after a few hours. It's time to call 999 if they are unresponsive, have pale or blue tinged skin, have a seizure, are taking less than eight breaths a minute, or don't stir when you try to wake them.

If you are unsure what to do, call NHS 111 for advice.



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