

STRAINS, SPRAINS, MINOR TRAUMA OF EXTREMITY

Level I

Skill Level: LPN, RN

Definition: Minor injury involving soft tissue, tendons, ligaments, from excessive use, weight or force. Expect an uncomplicated short-term recovery. There is reasonable expectation the problem will resolve in a short time (approximately one week) if patient adheres to treatment.

MILD	
<p>Subjective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Patient complains of musculoskeletal extremity pain with use but not at rest. Pain with little or no radiation. No bowel or bladder problems associated with injury. Usually there will be a recent trauma. Sometimes a chronic condition that is made worse with or without a new episode of trauma. 	<p>Assessment: "Alteration in Comfort"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pain complaint related to recent trauma. Impaired physical mobility related to musculoskeletal impairment or recent trauma.
<p>Objective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No obvious dysfunction of affected area. Range of motion normal to slightly diminished. No deformity. Color, motor function, sensation distal to injury is intact. Muscle tightness may be present. 	<p>Plan:</p> <p>Patient education and self-care items for this protocol include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tylenol/Aspirin 1-2 tabs every 4 hours Ibuprofen 200 mg 1-2 tabs QID. <p>At nursing discretion may use any of the below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ice and elevate x 24 hours if swelling. Heat prn thereafter. Educational/stretch handout if available. Instruct patient to return if not resolved in one week. Consider level II protocol.

Strains, Sprains, Minor Trauma of Extremity - Level I

Nursing Education:

1. Absent or diminished peripheral pulse requires immediate physician attention.
2. Frequently the complaints of pain are worse a few days after the initial trauma.
3. Fractures of the wrist may be missed. Refer patients with unexplained pain of the wrist to the provider.
4. Ligament ruptures do not retract and do not require immediate intervention.
5. Sometimes there may be muscle tightness. This is different from muscle spasm which is a sudden, sometimes violent involuntary and abnormal muscular contraction.
6. Establish consistency (or lack of consistency) between mechanism of injury, objective findings, and pain complaints if possible.
7. Contusions: unbroken skin with pain, swelling and bruising need time to heal. Use ice/heat and over the counter pain meds. Does not require physician referral unless symptoms of neurological or circulatory impairment.

APPROVED:

Medical Services Manager

Date

Chief Medical Officer

Date



Medical Director

7/28/09

Date

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