Hand Bruises: Care Instructions

Your Care Instructions

Bruises, or contusions, can happen as a result of an impact or fall. Most people think of a bruise as a black-and-blue spot. This happens when small blood vessels get torn and leak blood under the skin. The bruise may turn purplish black, reddish blue, or yellowish green as it heals. But bones and muscles can also get bruised. This may damage the hand but not cause a bruise that you can see.

Most bruises aren't serious and will go away on their own in 2 to 4 weeks. But sometimes a more serious hand injury might not heal on its own. Tell your doctor if you have new symptoms or your injury is not getting better over time. You may have tests to see if you have bone or nerve damage. These tests may include X-rays, a CT scan, or an MRI. If you damaged bones or muscles, you may need more treatment.

The doctor has checked you carefully, but problems can develop later. If you notice any problems or new symptoms, **get medical treatment right away.**

Follow-up care is a key part of your treatment and safety. Be sure to make and go to all appointments, and call your doctor if you are having problems. It's also a good idea to know your test results and keep a list of the medicines you take.

How can you care for yourself at home?

- Put ice or a cold pack on the hand for 10 to 20 minutes at a time. Put a thin cloth between the ice and your skin.
- Prop up your hand on a pillow when you ice it or anytime you sit or lie down during the next 3 days. Try to keep your hand above the level of your heart. This will help reduce swelling.
- Be safe with medicines. Read and follow all instructions on the label.
    - If the doctor gave you a prescription medicine for pain, take it as prescribed.
    - If you are not taking a prescription pain medicine, ask your doctor if you can take an over-the-counter medicine.
- Be sure to follow your doctor's advice about moving and exercising your injured hand.

When should you call for help?

Call your doctor now or seek immediate medical care if:

- Your pain gets worse.
- You have new or worse swelling.
- You have tingling, weakness, or numbness in the area near the bruise.
- The area near the bruise is cold or pale.
- You have symptoms of infection, such as:
    - Increased pain, swelling, warmth, or redness.
    - Red streaks leading from the area.
    - Pus draining from the area.

- A fever.

Watch closely for changes in your health, and be sure to contact your doctor if:

- You do not get better as expected.

Where can you learn more?

Go to https://www.healthwise.net/patiented

Enter **C876** in the search box to learn more about **"Hand Bruises: Care Instructions".**

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