

Arm Injury

Definition

- Injuries to the arm (shoulder to hand)
- Injuries to a bone, muscle, joint or ligament
- Muscle pain caused by too much exercise or work is covered in Arm Pain. This is called overuse.

Health Information

Types of Arm or Hand Injuries

- Fractures are broken bones. A broken collarbone is the most common broken bone in children. It's easy to notice because the collar bone is tender to touch. Also, the child cannot raise the arm upward.
- Dislocations happen when a bone is pulled out of a joint. A dislocated elbow is the most common type of this injury in kids. It's caused by an adult quickly lifting a child by the wrist or hand. It can also be caused by suddenly pulling a child towards you. Mainly seen in 1 to 4 year olds. It's also easy to spot. The child will hold his arm as if it were in a sling. He will keep the elbow bent and the palm of the hand down.
- Sprains - stretches and tears of ligaments
- Strains - stretches and tears of muscles (such as a pulled muscle)
- Muscle overuse from hard work or sports (such as a sore shoulder)
- Muscle bruise from a direct blow
- Bone bruise from a direct blow

Symptoms

- The main symptom is pain.

Prevention

- Careful adult supervision of young children
- Education of older children about high risk behaviors

Care Advice

1. **Overview:**
 - During sports, muscles and bones get bruised.
 - Muscles get stretched (pulled muscle).
 - Here is some care advice that should help.
2. **Pain Medicine:**
 - To help with the pain, give acetaminophen (such as Tylenol) or ibuprofen.
 - Ibuprofen works well for this type of pain.
 - Use as needed.
3. **Cold Pack:**
 - For pain or swelling, use a cold pack. You can also use ice wrapped in a wet cloth.
 - Put it on the sore muscles for 20 minutes.
 - Repeat 4 times on the first day, then as needed.
 - Caution: Avoid frostbite.

4. **Heat Pack:**

- If pain lasts over 2 days, put heat on the sore muscle.
- Use a heat pack, heating pad or warm wet washcloth.
- Do this for 10 minutes, then as needed.
- Caution: Avoid burns.

5. **Rest:**

- Rest the injured arm as much as possible for 48 hours.

6. **Activity:**

- Healing takes time. Try to maintain range of motion.
- Increase activity gradually.
- During recovery from your injury, here's a good rule: If it HURTS, don't do it.

7. **What to Expect:**

- Pain and swelling most often peak on day 2 or 3.
- Swelling should be gone by 7 days.
- Pain may take 2 weeks to fully go away.

Call Your Doctor If

- Pain becomes severe
- Pain is not better after 3 days
- Pain lasts more than 2 weeks
- You think your child needs to be seen
- Your child becomes worse

Pediatric Care Advice

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