

# Bruised or broken ribs

The emergency room doctor has determined that you have one or more broken or bruised ribs. The doctor discharges you and you can go home.

Here you will read:

- about the treatment of broken or bruised ribs,
- at-home tips,
- the recovery process
- for which complaints you should contact your doctor or general practitioner.

## What is the treatment for bruised or broken ribs?

It is not possible to treat this condition with plaster. The treatment consists only of pain relief, which is, very important. Always follow the advice of the doctor. For more information about the correct use of pain relief, see 'pain relief for adults'.

## What can you do?

Here are some advice to promote the healing process:

- To avoid complications, it is important that you take deep breaths on a regular basis. You can do this by taking deep breaths in and out several times an hour.
- Do not try to suppress coughing stimuli. Sighing and coughing can be painful, but it is very important. It is ok to have a good cough.
- Prevent pneumonia.
- Adhering to the pain relief advice will make it easier to continue to breathe and cough properly.

## How is the recovery progressing?

A rib bruise or a broken rib generally heals on its own. It takes about 6 weeks to heal from the fracture, but the pain can last longer.

## When to contact a doctor?

Possible complications of a bruise or fracture of one or more ribs include pneumonia or a collapsed lung. If you should develop symptoms such as acute shortness of breath, fever or cough with mucus, we advise you to contact your doctor or general practitioner.

## More information?

For more information please refer to the Emergency room at CMC or your general practitioner.

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