

What Warning Signs Should I Look Out For?

See your doctor or go to the Emergency Department if you have:



Fever



Worsening cough



Thick or bloody phlegm



Difficulty breathing



Severe chest pain



Vomiting or abdominal pain

Clinics 2A & 2B

TTSH Medical Centre, Level 2

Contact:

6357 7000 (Central Hotline)

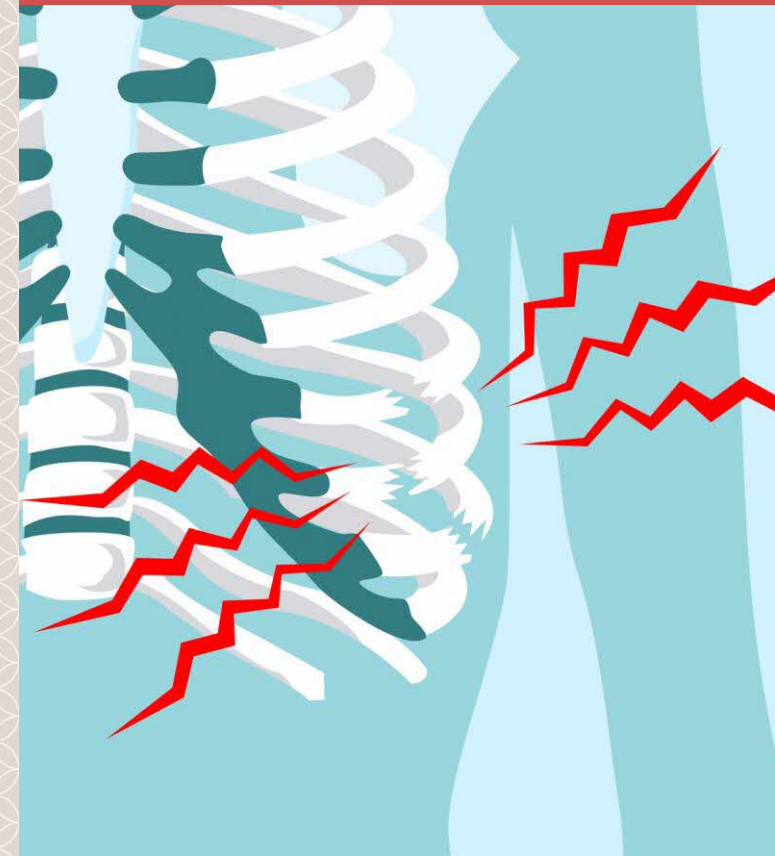


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TRAUMA SERVICES

Rib Fractures



What is a Rib Fracture?

A rib fracture is a crack or a break in one or more of the bones of the ribcage. This is usually due to trauma or injury to the chest, such as from a fall.

What Should I Expect?

- Chest pain which will be worst in the first week, and should slowly improve with time
- It is normal for the chest pain to last for about four to eight weeks
- You may experience some discomfort even after this period
- Temporary bruising or swelling of the chest

How are Rib Fractures Treated?

Simple rib fractures usually heal on their own within two to three months. They do not require surgery. Hospitalisation is not required unless there are other injuries or complications.

What Should I Do?

Pain Control



- Take pain medications regularly for at least one week
- Hold a pillow against your chest especially when coughing
- Apply an ice pack to your chest

Activity



- Take 10 deep breaths every hour to prevent lung infections
- Continue non-strenuous daily activities such as walking
- Avoid strenuous activities such as lifting heavy weights for three weeks
- Bed rest is not required

Others



- Do not smoke
- No dietary restrictions are needed

Follow-up



- A follow-up appointment will be arranged in four to six weeks
- A repeat chest X-ray will be done to look for complications such as lung infection, blood or air leak around your lungs, or worsening of the fracture