For further information please contact:

**Minor Injuries Unit**
Grindon Lane Primary Care Centre, Grindon Lane
Sunderland, SR3 4DE.
Tel. 0191 525 2305

**Minor Injuries Unit**
Bunnyhill Primary Care Centre, Hylton Lane
Sunderland, SR5 4BW.
Tel. 0191 519 5828

In association with Trauma & Orthopaedics Department

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**A guide for patients and carers**

NHS South of Tyne and Wear (serving Gateshead Primary Care Trust, South Tyneside Primary Care Trust and Sunderland Teaching Primary Care Trust) is committed to raising the standard of written information for patients, their carers, people who use the NHS and the general public.

This information can be made available in another format or language on request. Please contact the Communications and PR Team Tel: 0191 529 7118 Email: mopil@sotw.nhs.uk
You have been referred to the soft tissue knee clinic for further assessment of your knee injury. There may be a delay of a few days between your visit to the Minor Injuries Unit and your clinic appointment. This time is helpful to give the swelling a chance to reduce and therefore enable us to assess your knee more effectively. We therefore advise you to carry out the following to help settle the pain and swelling as rapidly as possible:

**Crutches**

You will probably have been provided with crutches to avoid weight-bearing through the leg. This is to allow a period of relative rest and to avoid causing further pain and swelling.

**Ice**

This can be applied via gel packs, ice or frozen peas for example (please discard frozen peas immediately after use). It is advised to use an extra layer such as a tea towel between the ice and skin to avoid the risk of an ice burn. Application of ice packs for 20 minutes on a regular basis is thought to be effective at reducing swelling and it is suggested that you apply the ice pack every 2-3 hours. It is also thought that the sooner that the ice packs can be applied after injury the better in order to minimise further tissue damage.

**Tubigrip (elasticated bandage)**

If required, Tubigrip will be provided. It should be applied during the day to try and reduce swelling that tends to naturally increase with standing. It should be removed at night.

**Elevation**

Raise the injured leg when sitting or lying to a level at least above the hip. This will encourage the swelling to reduce.

**Pain Relief (analgesics)**

Painkillers such as paracetamol can be used along with anti-inflammatory drugs such as ibuprofen to ease the pain of sprains and fractures and reduce swelling. However, ibuprofen is not recommended if you have a history of asthma, kidney, or liver disease, and aspirin should not be taken by children under the age of 16.

**Appropriate Exercises**

When a knee becomes swollen the thigh muscles will tend to automatically switch off. It is therefore important that you try and maintain muscle activity. This is best done little and often along with gentle bending and straightening of your knee as comfortable.

**What happens next?**

You will be assessed by either a consultant or specialist physiotherapist from the Orthopaedic Knee Service. Depending on the findings on your visit it may be recommended that you receive a course of rehabilitation, have further imaging of your knee such as an MRI scan or potentially listed for a small operation. This will be discussed fully during your visit with the most appropriate member of staff.