

on the back to sit or stand in one place than it is to move around. Do not sit, drive or stand in one place for more than 30 minutes at a time. Take short walks on level surfaces as soon as pain will allow.

- Ø **Limit bending and lifting** - Don't bend over or lift anything over 20 pounds until you are completely better. Learn to lift by bending your knees and using your leg muscles to help. Keep the load close to your body and avoid twisting, reaching and overhead work.
- Ø **Medicines** - Medicine to reduce pain and inflammation are helpful and muscle-relaxing drugs may also be prescribed.
- Ø **Therapy** - Put ice packs on your back every few hours for the first 2-3 days after your injury; after that ice or heat may be used to reduce pain and spasm. Back exercises and gentle massage may be of some benefit. You should be examined again if your back pain is not better in one week.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- Ø You have pain that radiates from your back into your legs
- Ø You develop new bowel or bladder control problems
- Ø You have unusual weakness or numbness in your arms or legs
- Ø You develop nausea or vomiting
- Ø You develop abdominal pain
- Ø You feel faint

Document Released: 12/18/2006

ExitCare® Patient Information ©2007 ExitCare, LLC.

Knee Sprain

Your caregiver has diagnosed you as suffering from a knee sprain. Sprains are painful injuries to the joints as a result of partial or complete tearing of ligaments. Ligaments are tough, fibrous tissues that hold bones together at the joints. A strain (sprain) has occurred when a ligament is stretched or damaged. This injury may take several weeks to heal. This is often the same length of time as a bone *fracture* (break in bone) takes to heal so even though a *fracture* (bone break) may not have occurred, the recovery times may be similar.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- Rest the injured area as directed. Then slowly start using the joint as directed by your caregiver and as the pain allows. Use crutches as directed. If the knee was splinted or casted, continue use and care as directed. If an ace bandage has been applied today, it should be removed and reapplied every 3 to 4 hours. It should not be applied tightly, but firmly enough to keep swelling down. **Watch toes and feet for swelling, bluish discoloration, coldness, numbness or excessive pain. If any of these symptoms occur, remove the ace bandage and reapply more loosely. If these symptoms persist, contact your caregiver or return to this location.**
- For the first 24 hours, keep the injured extremity elevated on 2 pillows while lying down.
- Apply ice for fifteen minutes to the injured area every couple hours while awake for the first half day, then four times per day for the first 48 hours. Put the ice in a plastic bag and place a towel between the bag of ice and your skin.
- Do not apply heat for 48 hours after your injury. Early use of heat will increase swelling and pain. After 48 hours you may use warm packs or warm soaks for 15 to 20 minutes, 2 to 4 times per day. This will give increased pain relief and faster resolution of the injury. **Do not sleep with a heating pad as it may cause burns.** If you are diabetic, do not use a heating pad unless instructed to do so.