Soft Tissue Injury (excluding elbow and hand)

What has happened to my child?
Your child has a presumed soft tissue injury of the __________ region.

We could not see any injury to the bone on X-ray but as your child was in pain a plaster backslab was put on.

What to do next?
Soft tissue injuries can still cause ongoing pain so your child may need Paracetamol or Ibuprofen to help with this. Keep the backslab clean and dry and arrange to see your GP in 10-14 days. If there are concerns with the backslab or your child has severe pain then see your GP sooner.

What will happen when I see my GP?
- The initial x-ray report may be checked
- The plaster backslab will be removed and your child examined
- Another X-ray may be ordered
- Your GP can contact the Hospital if they find any problems

If a soft tissue injury is confirmed:
If there is no ongoing pain or swelling, and the X-rays are normal, a plaster backslab is no longer needed. Your child is diagnosed as having a sprain and should be encouraged to start to move their injured arm or leg to prevent stiffness. When your child is comfortable they can start doing normal activities again, including sports.

If a fracture is diagnosed:
If a fracture is confirmed by X-ray, or other problems are found, your GP will get in touch with the Orthopaedic team at The Children's Hospital at Westmead to discuss further management. This MAY include:
- Leaving the backslab off or arranging for another to be applied
- Asking you to buy a removable splint available at the chemist
- Referring your child to the Orthopaedic outpatient clinic at The Children’s Hospital Westmead within a few days to a few weeks.
- Asking you to bring your child back to the Emergency Department for further Orthopaedic assessment.
Dear Doctor,

Many thanks for reviewing this child who sustained a presumed soft tissue injury of the _____________ region. X-rays did not reveal any obvious fracture (formal report pending). As he/she was in pain a plaster backslab was applied for analgesia.

The child will present to you for review within 10-14 days of injury. At this visit please:

- Remove the backslab by cutting through the crep bandage and wool between the plaster with scissors
- Examine the child’s limb for any tenderness, swelling, bruising, and range of motion
- Order further X-rays if required based on clinical examination

If there is minimal tenderness or swelling, and good range of motion (the joint may be a little stiff) with normal X-rays reported, no further immobilisation is required. A diagnosis of soft tissue injury (sprain) is confirmed and the child should be encouraged to move their limb to prevent stiffness. When comfortable the child may return to normal activities, including sports.

If a fracture is confirmed on X-ray or the limb examination causes ongoing concern then please contact the Orthopaedic Registrar/SRMO on-call at Children’s Hospital Westmead via switchboard on 9845000 to discuss further management and to expedite review if required.

Please do not routinely instruct the family to attend the Emergency Department unless there are acute/time critical concerns.

If you would like to check the initial X-ray report please call The Children’s Hospital Radiology department on 9845 2944 between 0900 to 1700 Monday to Friday.

Yours Sincerely,

Emergency Department
The Children’s Hospital at Westmead