

Home remedies: Just jammed your finger?

February 14 2020



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A jammed finger is typically a sprain to the joint or knuckle, of the finger. There may also be a small fracture or dislocation of the joint. The injury can be extremely painful, and the joint usually becomes swollen. A jammed finger is a common sports injury. For example, your fingertip receives the full impact of a hard hit baseball, basketball rebound or volleyball spike.

This type of injury may also result for other reasons. You reach out your arm to break a fall, and your finger jabs into the ground. The result is often a jammed finger. This type of injury usually heals quickly if there is no fracture, although the [pain](#) may linger for months when direct pressure is applied to the finger.

To treat a jammed finger:

- Ice the finger with a cold pack for 15 minutes. Placing your finger in ice water works, too.
- Elevate your hand to reduce swelling.
- To protect the finger during use:
- Buddy tape the injured finger to an adjacent finger use a self-adhesive wrap to tape above and below the finger joint—for example, [index finger](#) to middle finger or ring finger to small finger.

Seek [medical care](#) if:

- Your finger appears deformed.
- You cannot straighten your finger.
- The area becomes hot and inflamed and you develop a fever.
- Swelling and pain becomes significant or persistent.
- The finger becomes numb, and turns white or less pink.

Children require medical care because damage to the growth plate of a finger bone can lead to long term deformity.

Try the P.R.I.C.E. approach for any strain or sprain—protect, rest, ice, compression, elevation.

Protect the area to avoid pain and further injury.

Rest. Avoid activities that cause pain, swelling or discomfort. But don't avoid all physical activity. Instead, give yourself relative rest. With an [ankle sprain](#), you can usually still exercise other muscles to prevent deconditioning. For example, you could use an exercise bicycle, working both your arms and the uninjured leg while resting the injured ankle on a footrest peg. That way you still exercise three limbs and keep up your cardiovascular conditioning.

Ice. Even if you're seeking [medical help](#), ice the area immediately. Use an ice pack or slush bath of ice and water for 15 to 20 minutes each time and repeat every two to three hours while you're awake for the first few days following the [injury](#). Cold reduces pain, swelling and inflammation in injured muscles, joints and connective tissues. It also may slow bleeding if a tear has occurred. If the iced area turns white, stop treatment immediately. This could indicate frostbite. If you have vascular disease, diabetes or decreased sensation, talk with your [health care provider](#) before applying ice.

Compression. To help stop swelling, compress the area with an elastic bandage until the swelling stops. Don't wrap it too tightly or you may hinder circulation. Begin wrapping at the end farthest from your heart. Loosen the wrap if the pain increases, the area becomes numb or swelling is occurring below the wrapped area.

Elevation. To reduce swelling, elevate the injured area above the level of your heart, especially at night, which allows gravity to help reduce swelling.

Over-the-counter pain medications such as ibuprofen and acetaminophen also can be helpful.

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Citation: Home remedies: Just jammed your finger? (2020, February 14) retrieved 20 March 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2020-02-home-remedies-finger.html>

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