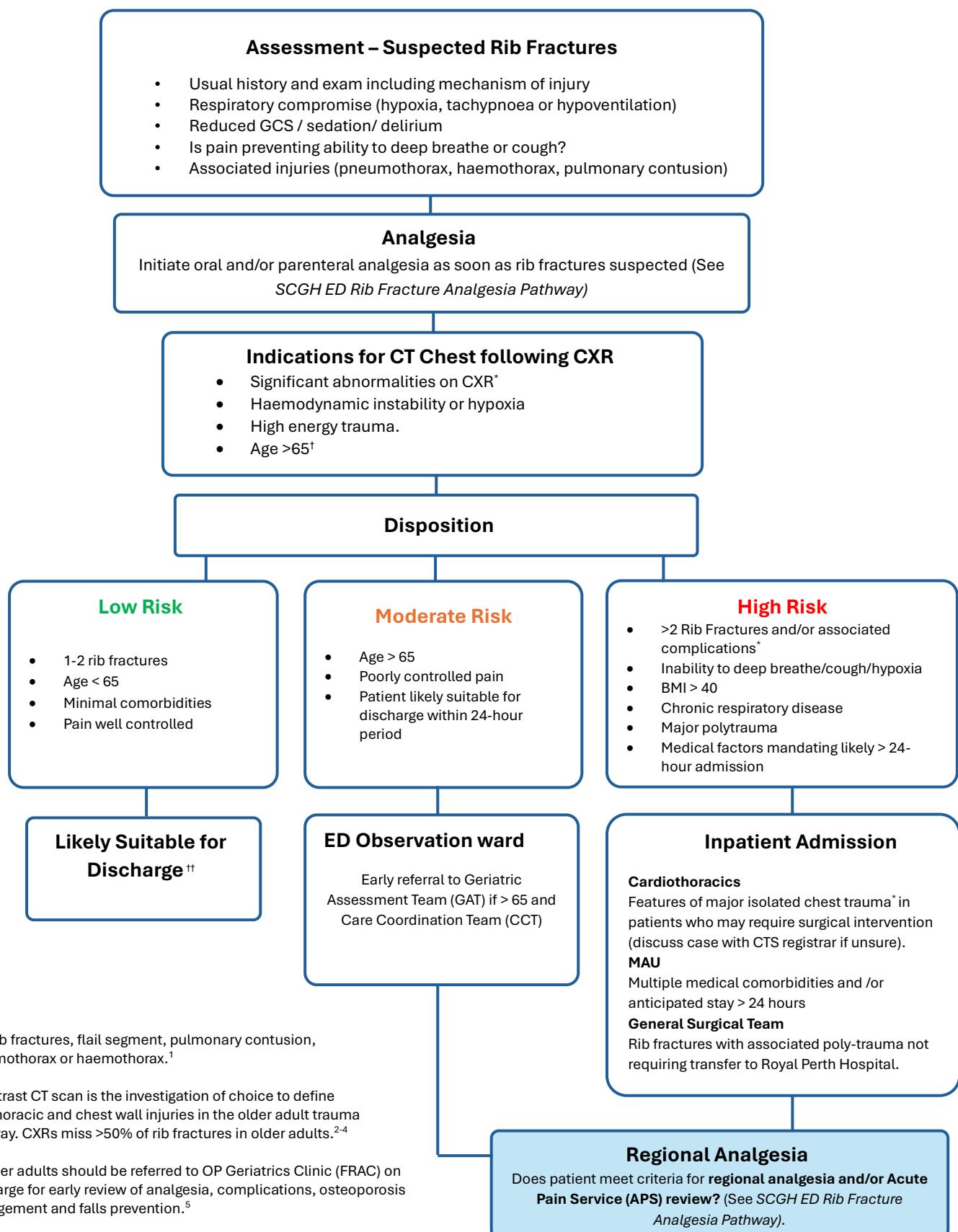




# SCGH ED Rib Fracture Guideline:

## Assessment and Management Pathway

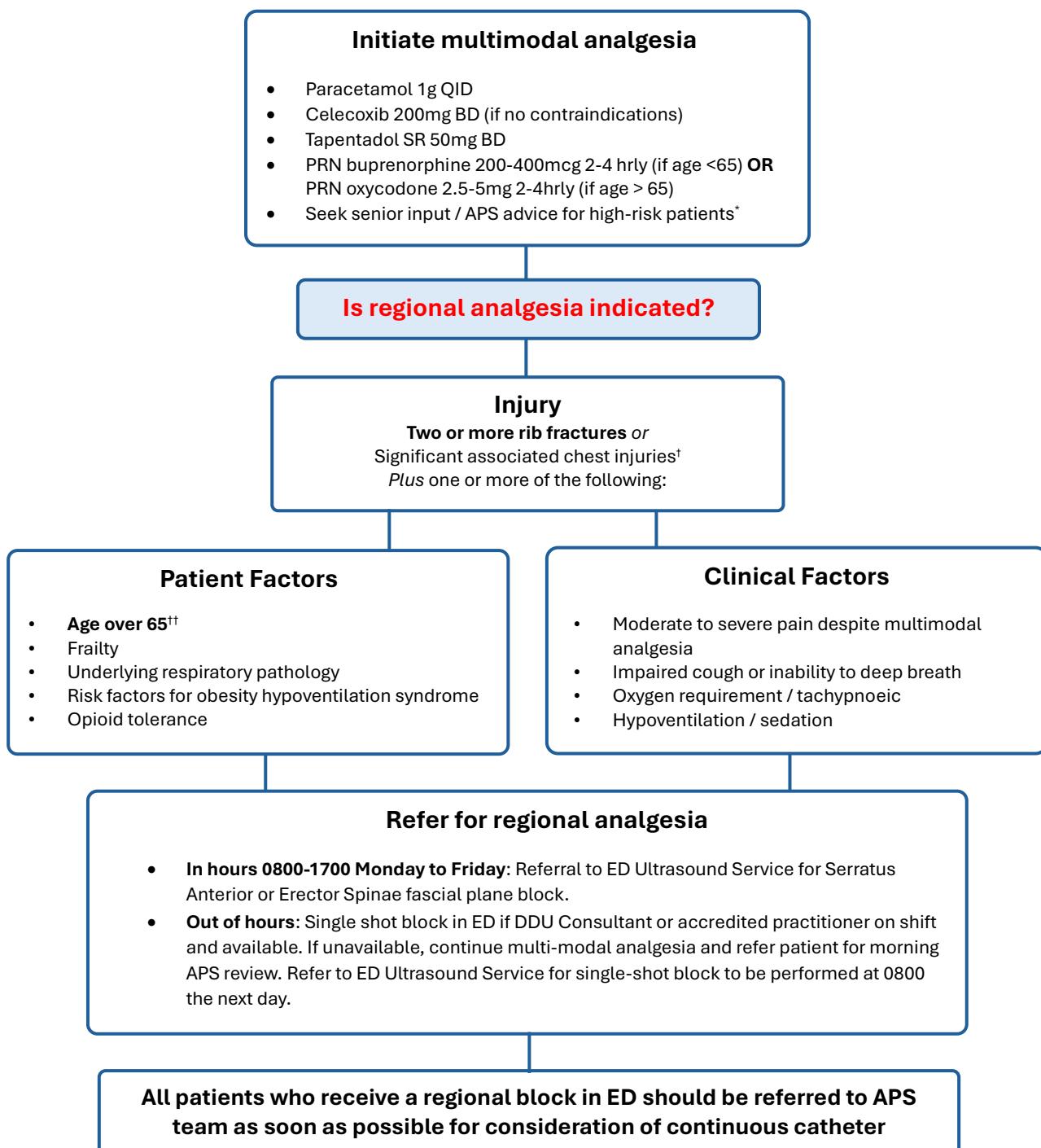




# SCGH ED Rib Fracture Guideline:

## Analgesia Pathway

Morbidity and mortality associated with rib fractures has previously been under recognised, especially in older adults. Early initiation of oral and regional analgesia in patients at high risk of complications is associated with marked reduction in morbidity and mortality.<sup>6</sup>



\* Patients with pre-existing complex pain conditions or long-term opiate use, patients known to Community Program for Opioid Pharmacotherapy (CPOP), or patients who have significant underlying renal / hepatic dysfunction.

† Pulmonary contusion, pneumothorax, haemothorax, flail segment or ICC requirement.

†† In older adults with multiple rib fractures, regional analgesia use was associated with a 35% lower risk of delirium.<sup>7</sup>

## SCGH Rib Fracture Guideline: References

1. Radiology Across Borders. Chest Trauma Diagnostic Imagine Pathway. Accessed 18/10/2025. Available from: [https://radiologyacrossborders.org/diagnostic\\_imaging\\_pathways/imaging-pathways/trauma/visceral-trauma/blunt-chest-trauma](https://radiologyacrossborders.org/diagnostic_imaging_pathways/imaging-pathways/trauma/visceral-trauma/blunt-chest-trauma)
2. London Major Trauma System – Management of Older Major Trauma patients. Third Edition. April 2021. Accessed 24/11/2025. Available from: <pan-london-major-trauma-system-management-of-older-trauma.-third-editionapril-2021.pdf>
3. Clinical Excellent Queensland. Clinical Practice Guideline: Blunt Chest Trauma. Accessed 24/11/2025. Available from: [Clinical Practice Guideline - Blunt chest trauma](#)
4. Birse F, Williams H, Shipway D, Carlton E. Blunt chest trauma in the elderly: an expert practice review. *Emerg Med J.* 2020 Feb;37(2):73-78. doi: 10.1136/emermed-2019-209143. Epub 2019 Dec 12. PMID: 31831589.
5. Royal Australian Collage of General Practitioners. Osteoporosis risk assessment, diagnosis and management. 2025. Available from [RACGP - Osteoporosis management and fracture prevention in post-menopausal women and men > 50 years of age](#)
6. van Zyl T, Ho AM, Klar G, Haley C, Ho AK, Vasily S, et al. Analgesia for rib fractures: a narrative review. *Can J Anaesth.* 2024;71(4):535-47.
7. O'Connell KM, Patel KV, Powelson E, Robinson BRH, Boyle K, Peschman J, Blocher-Smith EC, Jacobson L, Leavitt J, McCrum ML, Ballou J, Brasel KJ, Judge J, Greenberg S, Mukherjee K, Qiu Q, Vavilala MS, Rivara F, Arbab S. Use of regional analgesia and risk of delirium in older adults with multiple rib fractures: An Eastern Association for the Surgery of Trauma multicenter study. *J Trauma Acute Care Surg.* 2021 Aug 1;91(2):265-271. doi: 10.1097/TA.0000000000003258. PMID: 33938510; PMCID: PMC9704032.