

Advice after breaking your wrist

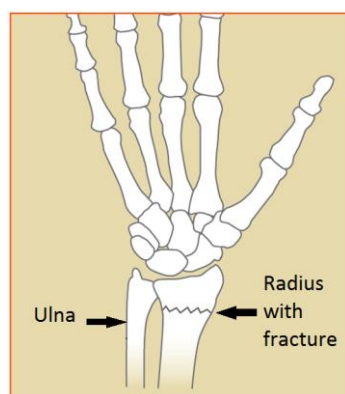
Fracture Clinic Patient Information Leaflet

Your injury

A fracture is the same as a break in the bone. The wrist joint is made up of your forearm bones (the radius and the ulna) and hand bones (the carpal bones). You have a break of your radius and/or ulna. This is a common fracture.

The common symptoms following this type of fracture include:

- Pain straight after an injury
- Swelling
- Bruising
- Difficulty moving the wrist and hand
- Deformity at the site of injury



Your treatment plan

The team looking after you has made the decision to manage your broken wrist in a plaster cast or splint whilst the bones heal. If required, you will be given an appointment to return to fracture clinic for follow up. The wrist will be in the plaster cast or splint for 6 to 8 weeks.

Occasionally, the fracture may lose its position in plaster. In some cases this may result in your needing an operation. The team treating you will discuss this with you should this be required.

What should I do at home?

- Use over the counter pain killers as required.
- Elevate the injured arm in a sling, or on pillows at night.
- You should not drive whilst in a cast or splint.
- You can return to work once you are able to do your normal duties.

How long will it take to heal?

Most fractures heal without any problems in six to twelve weeks. However, it may take six to nine months for your symptoms to settle – these can include pain or discomfort, stiffness, decreased strength, and swelling. The bones may take longer to heal if you suffer from diabetes or if you smoke. Some injuries will result in long-term symptoms. There may always be a 'bump' in your wrist where you broke the bones.

For advice on stopping smoking please visit www.nhs.uk/smokefree or discuss this with your GP.

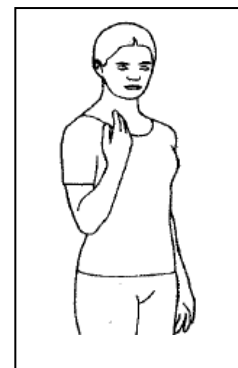
Once the fracture has started to heal some people might be referred to their local physiotherapy department for assessment, advice and rehabilitation.

Exercises

You should try to do these exercises three to four times a day; you can start them immediately.

Repeat these ten times each:

1. Bend your elbow as far as you can, hold for 5-10 seconds, then straighten elbow as far as you can for 5-10 seconds and hold.





2. Start with all your fingers straight and then bend all your fingers and thumb to make a fist.



If you have any worries or concerns please contact one of the following:

Virtual Fracture Clinic Helpline 01225 821668 or Fracture Clinic 01225 825602

Trauma and Orthopaedic Department

Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust

Combe Park, Bath BA1 3NG

01225 428331 www.ruh.nhs.uk

Please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) if you require this leaflet in a different format, or would like to feedback your experience of the hospital. Email ruh-tr.PatientAdviceandLiaisonService@nhs.net or telephone 01225 825656.