

## Fracture Clinic Patient Information Leaflet

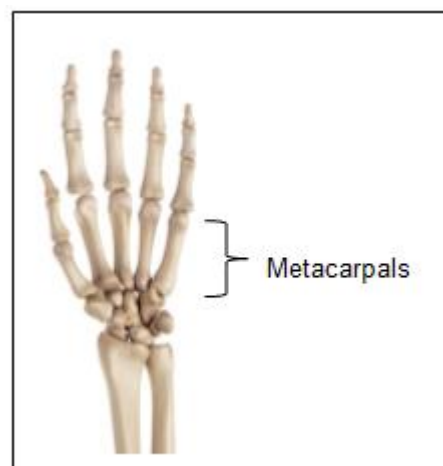
# Advice after a 5<sup>th</sup> Metacarpal Fracture

## The Injury

A fracture is the same as a break in the bone. Your hand is made up of several small bones including five metacarpal bones that connect the fingers to the wrist. You have fractured the fifth metacarpal below the little finger. This is a common fracture.

The common symptoms following this type of injury include:

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



## What happens now?

You may be put in a plaster cast or given a splint to support your finger, some people will have the injured finger strapped instead but this will depend on the type of fracture you have.

These injuries normally heal by themselves with time but do occasionally need surgery. You will be given an appointment to return to the fracture clinic for follow up if needed.

## What should I do at home?

- Use over the counter pain killers as needed
- Elevate the injured hand on pillows when resting to help reduce swelling
- You can return to work or school as soon as pain allows and you can do your normal light duties. Avoid loading the hand heavily for six weeks.
- You should not drive whilst in a plaster cast
- You should avoid sport and games for at least six weeks after the injury

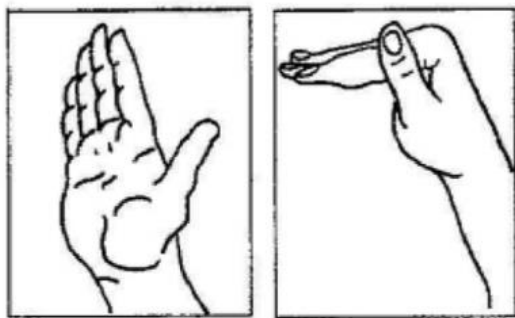
## How long will it take to heal?

Most fractures heal without any problems in about eight weeks. However, it may take several months for your symptoms to settle completely. These can include pain or discomfort, stiffness, decreased strength and swelling. Some people may notice a bump on the back of the hand where the fracture occurred but this shouldn't affect hand function. The bones may take longer to heal if you suffer from diabetes or if you smoke.

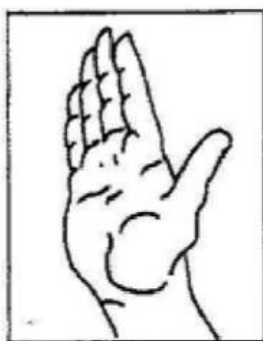
For advice on stopping smoking please visit [www.nhs.uk/smokefree](http://www.nhs.uk/smokefree) or discuss this with your GP.

## Exercises

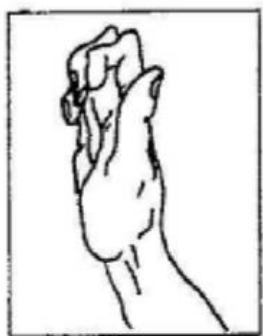
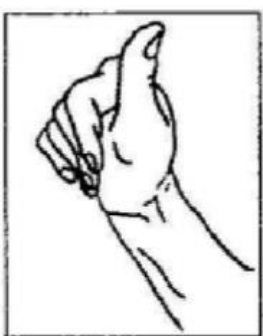
You should try to do these exercises three to four times a day; you can start these immediately.



Start with your fingers straight then bend them all forward at the back knuckles only like a flat table top.



Start with your fingers straight then make a full fist with them all.



Start with all your fingers relaxed then vigorously pull your fingers up into a hooked finger position.



Start with your fingers straight then hook them all forward keeping the back knuckles straight.

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

**Virtual Fracture Clinic Helpline 01225 821668 or Fracture Clinic 01225 825602**

Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust  
Combe Park, Bath BA1 3NG  
01225 428331 [www.ruh.nhs.uk](http://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](mailto:ruh-tr.PatientAdviceandLiaisonService@nhs.net) or telephone 01225 825656 or 826319.