

Orthopaedic Department
York teaching hospital

This is a follow-up letter to your recent telephone consultation with the fracture care team, explaining the ongoing management of your injury. Your case has been reviewed by an Orthopaedic Consultant (Bone Specialist) and Fracture Care Physiotherapist.

You have sustained a fracture to one of the bones in your elbow (proximal radius).

- Healing:** This normally takes approximately 6 weeks to heal.
- Pain:** Your elbow may be swollen. Take pain killers as prescribed.
- Using your arm:** It is important to keep the elbow moving to prevent stiffness. You should avoid any heavy lifting for the full 6 weeks.
- Follow up:** We do not routinely follow up patients with this type of injury. **If after three weeks** you are not close to achieving full movement in your elbow please contact us using the details listed above. We may arrange some physiotherapy to help you with your exercises.

Area of Injury:



If you are worried that you are unable to follow this rehabilitation plan, or have any questions, then please phone the Fracture Care Team for advice.

Or if you are experiencing pain and symptoms anywhere else, other than at the site of the original injury or surrounding area, please also get in touch using the telephone or e-mail details at the top of this letter.

York Virtual Fracture Clinic Contact details:

Phone: 01904 726575

**Scarborough Trauma Assessment and
Treatment Unit (TATU):**

Phone: 01723 342021 / 07385463781

Email: virtualfractclinic@york.nhs.uk

Please follow the management plan below.

What to expect:

Weeks since injury	Rehabilitation plan
0-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Wear sling for comfort only. ✓ Take your arm out of the sling and practise moving the elbow (see below). ✓ Do the exercise below every hour in the daytime. You can start straight away.
2-6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Try not to use the sling and do normal light activities with the arm. ✗ Don't lift more than the weight of a cup of tea for six weeks. ✓ Continue with the exercises until you have your full range of movement.
6 -12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The fracture will be healed ✓ Resume normal, day-to-day, activities but be guided by any pain you get. ✗ Heavy tasks may cause discomfort.
12	If you are still experiencing significant pain and stiffness then please contact us for further consultation.

Advice for a new injury:

Cold packs: A cold pack (ice pack or frozen peas wrapped in a damp towel) can provide short-term pain relief. Apply this to the sore area for up to 15 minutes, every few hours. The ice must never be in direct contact with the skin.

Rest: Try to rest your arm for the first 24-72 hours. However, it is important to maintain movement in your elbow. Gently move your elbow following the exercises shown. These should not cause too much pain. This will ensure your elbow does not become stiff and it will help the healing process.

Smoking advice:

Medical evidence suggests that smoking prolongs fracture healing time. In extreme cases it can stop healing altogether. It is important that you consider this information with relation to your recent injury. Stopping smoking during the healing phase of your fracture will help ensure optimal recovery from this injury.

For advice on smoking cessation and local support available, please refer to the following website: <http://smokefree.nhs.uk> or discuss this with your GP.

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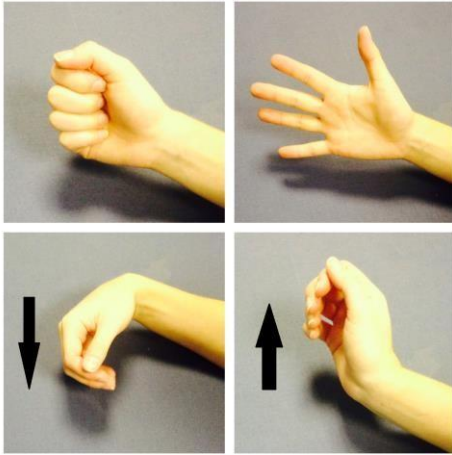
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Exercises

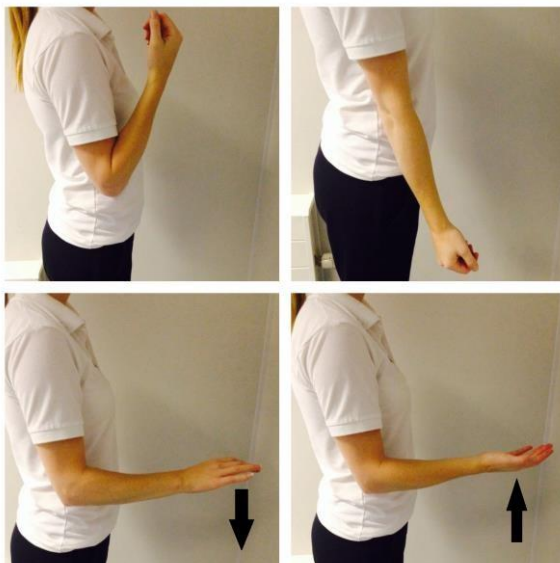
Initial Exercises to be done 5-6 times a day



Finger and wrist flexion and extension

Open and close your hand as shown 10-15 times.
Then move your wrist up and down 10-15 times.

After a few days, hold a soft ball / ball of socks. Squeeze the ball as hard as possible without pain.
Hold for 5 seconds and repeat 10 times.



Elbow Bend to Straighten

Bend and straighten your elbow as far as you can without pain. You should not feel more than a mild to moderate stretch. You can use your other arm to assist if necessary.

Repeat 10 - 15 times if there is no increase in pain.

Forearm Rotations

Begin this exercise with your elbow at your side and bent. Slowly turn your palm up and down as far as you can go without pain. You should not feel more than a mild to moderate stretch. You can use your other arm to assist if necessary.

Repeat 10 - 15 times if there is no increase in pain.

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