Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh Teaching Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Simple Wrist Fracture

Version number: **2**
Last modified date: **12th November 2026**

Simple Wrist Fracture

Patient Information

Trauma and Orthopaedics

- Author ID: VL
- Leaflet Ref: Musc 083
- Version: 2
- Date Produced: June 2026
- Expiry Date: June 2028

Introduction

You have fractured (broken) a bone in your wrist. This is a very common injury. It is normal to have pain, swelling and bruising around the wrist, hand and fingers, and this can last for a few weeks.

Because your bones are still in a good position, this injury does not need surgery.

Most people make a very good recovery. Following the advice you have been given and doing the exercises regularly, little and often, will help your wrist heal and regain movement and strength.



Injury recovery

- It usually takes 6-12 weeks for this injury to heal
- Pain and swelling are normal
- You can take simple pain relief e.g. paracetamol, for as long as you need to: Do not take more than the recommended dose. Your local Pharmacist can give advice about pain relief
- Try to make a full fist and straighten your fingers as early as possible
- You can start doing gentle wrist exercises out of the splint after 4 weeks
- Smoking slows down healing. We advise you to stop. Please talk to your General Practitioner (GP) or go online at https://www.nhs.uk/better-health/quit-smoking/

Occasionally a plaster cast is applied instead of a splint. The Fracture Clinic will tell you when this should be removed.

Caring for your injury

Elevate your hand for the first 24 – 72 hours after your injury

- Sit more than usual and keep your hand lifted on a cushion (chest high). This will help to reduce the swelling

Ice can help with your pain and swelling.

- Wrap a damp tea towel around a bag of frozen peas and place on your wrist and hand for up to 15 minutes, every hour, as needed
- Do not use ice if the feeling in your hand is reduced, or if you have skin problems

Remember to wear your splint for the first 4 weeks.

- You can take the splint off to wash and when resting, if comfortable.

Exercise week 1- 4

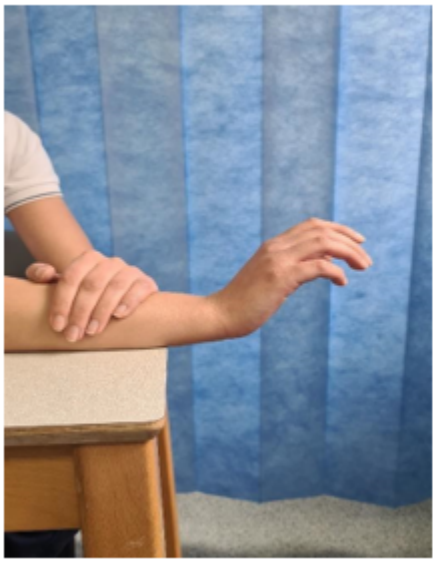
Gentle movement of the elbow, fingers and thumb creates blood flow to the injury. This helps it to heal and reduces swelling. Starting early prevents stiffness.

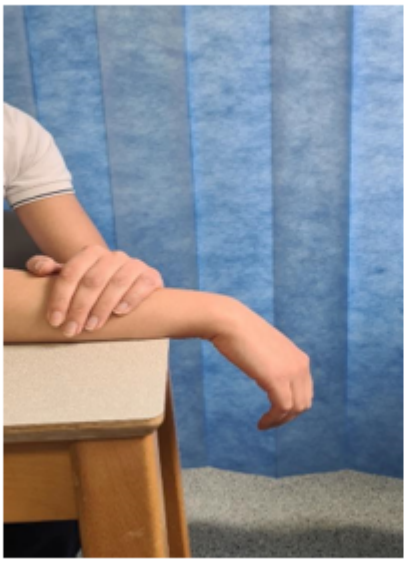




Exercise from 4 weeks

Remove the splint and start wrist exercises as below. All exercises should be performed little and often or at least four times per day, but you should avoid pushing into any sharp pain. You can access more information in our ‘removal of cast following a hand or wrist fracture’ leaflet TPY 043 (click link or visit wwl.nhs.uk website)







Disclaimer

Not all exercises are suitable for everyone, and while every precaution has been taken in sele cting these exercises, they do not come without risks. If you have any concerns regarding your injury, or whether you should partake in the exercises, then you should consult your General Practitioner (GP) or Physiotherapist before beginning any exercises in this leaflet.

It is quite normal to feel some discomfort following exercise, but it is important that this disc omfort eases within 2 hours of finishing the exercise and does not have an overall negative effect on your symptoms.

The exercise plans shown in this leaflet are designed to be used as a guide and a point of refer ence; they can be modified and progressed under the supervision of your Physiotherapist.

Osteoporosis?

If you have broken a bone AND are over 50 years of age, you may be at risk of having osteoporosis (weakening of the bones).

- You will be contacted separately by the Specialist Fracture Liaison Team and asked to opt in for a review of your bone health.
- If you live outside the Wigan area, please speak to your GP.

As we get older, bones do not renew themselves as well. This causes them to weaken; it happens to everyone to some degree, but if the bones become fragile, it's called osteoporosis.

You can help look after your bone health by:

- Get plenty of calcium and Vitamin D as part of a well-balanced diet and outdoor activities
- Doing regular weight bearing exercise e.g., walking, running
- Stopping smoking
- Avoid drinking too much alcohol

Frequently asked questions

Driving

You must not drive with the splint / cast on. It is your own responsibility. You are allowed to drive when:

- You can safely control the car
- You are no longer using the splint / cast
- You can grip the steering wheel / gear stick safely
- You can perform an emergency stop

Work

This depends on your individual situation. You can return to work when you feel able to do your job. Consider a phased return where needed / possible.

Sports

You should avoid contact / ball sports for 8-12 weeks. You can exercise your lower body as soon as you feel able and safe to.

For more information online, please visit https://www.wwl.nhs.uk/virtual-fracture-clinic

Remember….

- Wrist fractures can be very painful
- The majority of injuries will recover in 6-12 weeks, but you may experience stiffness for up to 12 months
- Gentle exercises will aid your recovery and reduce risk of re-injury

Further Advice

If you have any concerns regarding your wrist, contact:

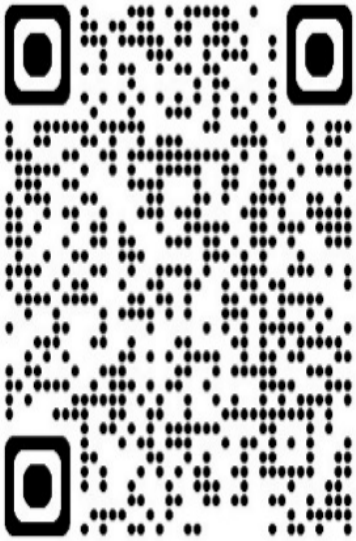
Fracture Clinic Helpline 01942 822595

Please leave a message with name, telephone number and brief description of reason for call. We will aim to call you back within 24 hours Monday to Friday 8.30am until 5:00pm (please note it will be Monday if you call over the weekend).

Adult MSK Physiotherapy Self-Referral

If you are struggling to regain your movement or get back to normal activities, you can self-refer to Physiotherapy. A referral form can be found on this webpage:

https://www.wwl.nhs.uk/adult-msk-physiotherapy-self-referral



Please scan the QR Code to access the website.

Telephone Numbers:

Boston House Health Centre Telephone 0300 707 1113

Leigh Infirmary Telephone 0300 707 1597 / 0300 707 1595

Platt Bridge Health Centre Telephone 0300 707 1772



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