

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

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

An occult fracture is a fracture that does not appear in X-rays but there are signs that indicate one, such as pain and swelling.



- Healing:** This injury takes approximately six weeks to heal.
- Pain:** Your elbow may be swollen. Take pain killers as required (always read the label; do not exceed the recommended dose).
- Using your arm:** It is important to keep the elbow moving to prevent stiffness. You should avoid any lifting, pushing and pulling for 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. If required, we will ask the physiotherapy team to help you with your exercises.

If you are worried that you are unable to follow this rehabilitation plan, or have any questions, 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 surrounding area, please also get in touch using the telephone or e-mail details at the top of this letter.

Please follow the management plan on the next page.

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 section on 'Rest' below). ✓ Do the exercises on the following page 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, please contact us for a 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.

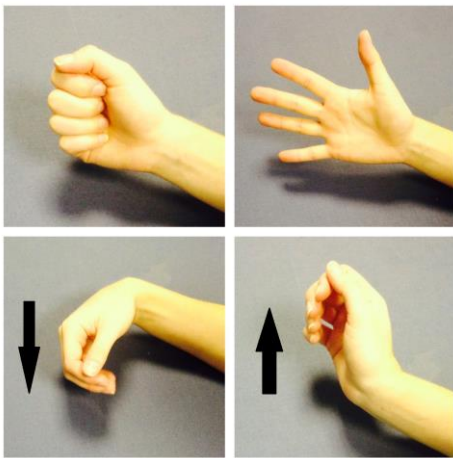
Rest: Try to rest your arm for the first 24 to 72 hours. However, it is important to maintain movement in your elbow. Gently move your elbow following the exercises shown. These should not cause too much pain. This will ensure your elbow does not become stiff and it will help the healing process.

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 the best recovery from this injury.

If you would like help with stopping smoking, please contact a member of the Hospital Stop Smoking Team on 01384 456111 ext. 2783, please refer to the following website: <http://smokefree.nhs.uk> or discuss this with your GP.

Exercises to be done 5-6 times a day as soon as possible

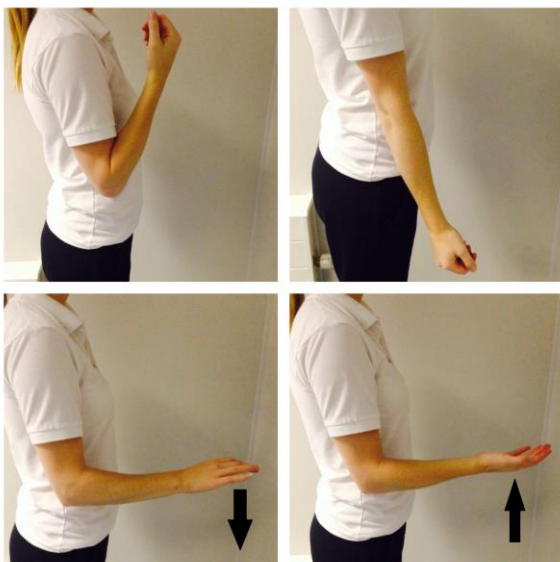


Finger and wrist flexion and extension

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 or a ball of socks. Squeeze the ball as hard as possible without causing yourself 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 to 15 times if there is no increase in pain.