

Aftercare for the fracture of the head of the radius bone in your elbow

Emergency Department

Information for Patients

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Discharge advice

Your X-rays suggest that you have an uncomplicated break of the radial head. This is the top end of one of your two forearm bones (called the radius). It forms part of your elbow joint.

These fractures normally heal very well after resting your arm in a sling for a short period, and then getting your arm moving again soon after the injury.

Most people do not need any further hospital appointments, but your X-rays and notes will be reviewed by the orthopaedic team (bone specialists). The team will contact you if they feel that your injury needs a further assessment.

What to do

Wear your sling for 2 to 3 days (no longer than 1 week), and then slowly start using your arm as pain allows, using the exercises on the next page. Over the counter painkillers such as paracetamol and ibuprofen will help you to do this.

It may take 6 to 8 weeks for the pain to settle completely.

Many people with radial head fractures find that they can no longer fully straighten or bend their elbow. In some cases, you may not regain full extension (straightening) even after the fracture has fully healed, but this should not cause problems with using your arm in daily life.

What not to do

- Do not do any heavy lifting for 4 to 6 weeks.
- Do not play contact sports for 4 to 6 weeks.
- You **must not** drive until you can perform an emergency stop and have full control of the steering wheel. Not only is this unsafe, but your insurance may not be valid.

**Health information and support is available at www.nhs.uk
or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice**

Visit www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk for maps and information about visiting Leicester's Hospitals

To give feedback about this information sheet, contact InformationForPatients@uhl-tr.nhs.uk

Suggested exercises

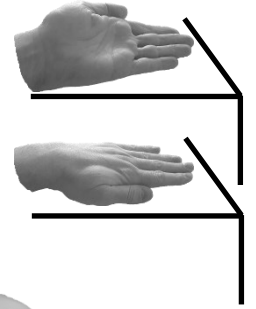
Bend and straighten your elbow.

Repeat this 10 times. Do this 3 times a day.



Turn your palm to face upwards then turn downwards on table.

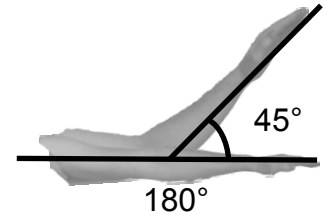
Repeat this 10 times. Do this 3 times a day.



After 3 weeks stand in front of a mirror with arms out to your sides and bend elbow to touch shoulders, as per diagram.



You can expect to lose a small degree of extension (straightening) of your elbow joint. If at 3 months you have lost over 45 degrees of extension and this affects your daily functions, then ask your GP to refer you back to the orthopaedic team, as you might then benefit from additional treatment.



Contact details

If you have any concerns in the first 4 weeks after the injury, please contact the Triage Room in Fracture Clinic for advice.

Triage Room: 0116 258 5430 Monday to Friday - 8.30am to 8.30pm.

You can also contact your GP.

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على هذه المعلومات بلغة أخرى، الرجاء الاتصال على رقم الهاتف الذي يظهر في الأسفل
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Aby uzyskać informacje w innym języku, proszę zadzwonić pod podany niżej numer telefonu

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