

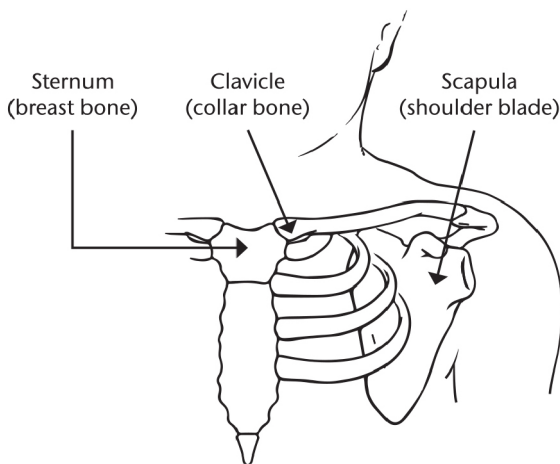
Discharge advice following Clavicle Fracture - Adults

Information for patients

WHAT IS MY INJURY?

You have a fracture (break) to your collarbone - called your clavicle. This is the bone that connects your breastbone to the shoulder blade.

Normal anatomy:



WHAT IS THE TREATMENT?

You will be put in a sling after the diagnosis is made. The sling is intended to support the weight of your arm when you are up and about. It can come off for dressing, getting washed and when you are resting.

Often, after a few weeks, you will start to feel that you need to wear it less, and in due course not at all as the bone heals.

If you remove it to sleep you may find pillows to support your arm helpful.

You may require regular painkillers like paracetamol and ibuprofen which you should take as prescribed or in line with manufacturer's guidance.

The manufacturers usually put a waist strap on the standard slings. These are not needed if you have a clavicle fracture, and they are usually removed in the Emergency Department. If not, you can remove, or cut off, the waist strap yourself.

FOLLOW UP

Prior to leaving the Emergency Department, you will have been referred to the orthopaedic virtual fracture clinic (VFC), and been given the VFC advice leaflet. If you do not have this leaflet, please contact the Emergency Department, as it contains important information on follow-up of your injury.

They will discuss your X-rays and then contact you directly on the telephone number you supplied to the Emergency Department. This is usually within three working days. Standard management for the majority of clavicle fractures is to let you heal by yourself, and the anticipated phone call will simply be to confirm when your follow-up will start. Surgery is rarely needed.

You should come back to the Emergency Department if you experience new weakness at your elbow or hand, or new altered sensation in the affected arm.

RECOVERY

You may need to wear a sling until the fracture site is non-tender and you can move your arm fully, without much discomfort. This usually takes between 6-12 weeks as it will take that long for the fracture to heal.

As a rough guide to help with basic planning, if your fracture heals fairly quickly, you might still not be ready to get back to activities such as driving a car for eight weeks.

Your fracture will need to have healed before you can get back to sport or a physically demanding job, and that will be considered as part of the follow-up process.

EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT

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