



Distal Radius Fracture

Doncaster Royal Infirmary
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Tel: 01302 644665

You will be followed up by the consultant.

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 Extended Scope Physiotherapist.

You have sustained a distal radius fracture (the bone on the thumb side of the wrist).

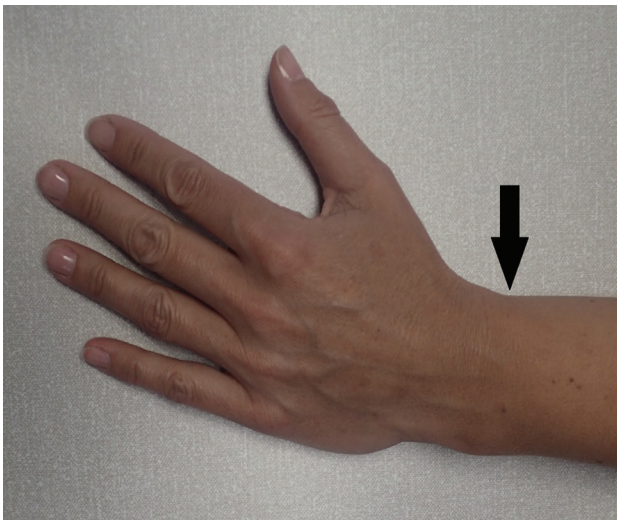
Healing: This normally takes approximately 6 weeks to heal. It is normal for it to continue to ache a bit for 3-6 months after the injury.

Pain and swelling: Take pain killers as prescribed. The plaster backslab helps healing by keeping the bones in a good position. Elevate the arm to reduce swelling for the first few days.

Using your arm: It is important to keep the fingers and thumb moving to prevent stiffness.

Follow up: There is a small chance that this fracture can displace (move).
Therefore we routinely recommend a repeat x ray at 1 week after the injury and a new plaster cast.

If you have not received a letter for this appointment, please contact the booking team on Tel: 01302 642500.



If you are worried that you are unable to follow this rehabilitation plan,

Or, if you are experiencing pain or symptoms, other than at the site of the original injury or surrounding area,

Or, have any questions, then please phone the number at the top of this letter for advice.

Please follow the Management plan below:

Weeks since injury	Rehabilitation plan
0-1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ You will be in a backslab.✓ Use the sling for the first few days if the arm is painful.✓ Move your fingers and elbow often (do the stage 1 exercises).
1-6	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ You will be seen in clinic.✓ You will be put in a full plaster (this will be removed in the clinic at 5-6 weeks). Continue to move the fingers often.✓ You can use the arm for simple tasks as pain permits.
6-12	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ The fracture is united (healed)✓ You can begin to resume normal activity but be guided by any pain you are experiencing.✓ You can start the stage 2 exercises below if the wrist feels stiff.✓ Carry out day to day activities.✗ Heavy tasks, heavy lifting or sport may cause some initial discomfort.
12	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✗ If you are still experiencing significant pain and swelling then please contact the Fracture Care Team for advice.

Advice for a new injury:

Rest and Elevation:

Try to rest the arm for the first 24-72 hours to allow the early stage of healing to begin. Raise your wrist above the level of your heart with a sling if it is throbbing.

Movement and exercise:

It is important to keep your fingers and thumb moving while you are in the plaster. After the plaster is removed your wrist will be stiff, please follow the exercises below to get the movement back.

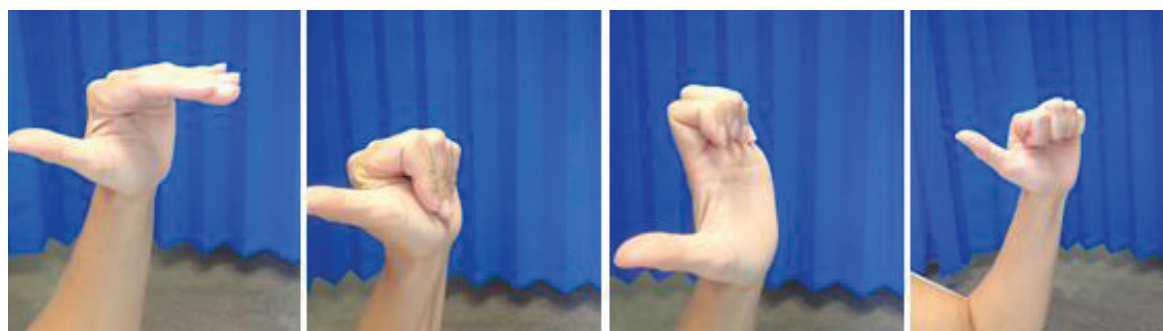
Smoking cessation

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.

Exercises

Stage 1 exercises:



Finger exercises:

Keep your fingers moving whilst you are in the plaster.



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 to 90 degrees.

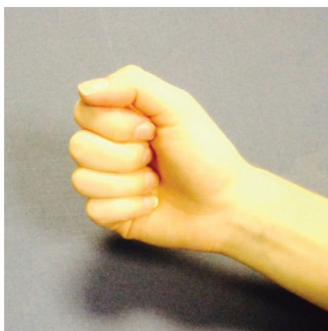
Slowly turn your palm up and down as far as you can go without pain.

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.

Stage 2 exercises:



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.

