

Your child's clavicle fracture (paediatric clavicle fracture)

Information for parents whose child does
not need a follow up appointment.

Physiotherapy department

What is this information about?

This information is about your child's collar bone (clavicle) fracture.

It tells you:

- How to look after your child when they go home from hospital with a clavicle fracture
- What follow-up treatment your child might have
- Who to contact if you need further help and support.



What is a clavicle fracture?

A clavicle fracture is a break in the collarbone. Along with your shoulder blade (scapula) your collarbone forms the 'shoulder girdle'. This is a bony link that connects an upper arm to the main part of body.

Most breaks to the collarbone happen around the middle section of the bone.

Does my child have a fracture or a break?

If you have a fracture, it means you have a broken bone. 'Fractured bone' and 'broken bone' both mean the same.

How long is it likely to take for children clavicle fracture to heal?

Clavicle fracture usually takes 6 to 12 weeks to heal. However, younger children are likely to recover faster as their fractures usually heal more quickly.

They should have good movement (although it may still be a bit sore) by 2 to 4 weeks after their injury. Please contact the Virtual Fracture Clinic if this is not the case.

Once their collarbone has healed your child may have a small, painless lump over the fracture site. This is usual for this type of fracture.

Will smoking or vaping slow down my child's healing?

Yes. Smoking slows healing so if your child smokes or vapes they should try to stop or cut down. This is most important in the first 2 weeks after their injury. If they would like help to stop smoking they can talk to their GP or visit **Quit smoking – NHS** (www.nhs.uk) for further information. We have included this information as we are aware that some older children and young adults do smoke.

What should I do if my child is in pain after clavicle fracture?

If your child is in pain, give them their usual painkillers or painkillers given to you in the emergency department. Follow the dose instructions on the packet. If your child is struggling with pain do speak to your GP or pharmacist.

It is usual for your child to be in more pain on the second night after the injury than on the first. They may find it more comfortable to sleep propped up on pillows.

Using a cold pack may help with pain and swelling in the first few days. You can use an ice pack or bag of frozen peas wrapped in a damp towel.

Be aware

Do not apply an ice pack directly on to your child's skin.

How long should my child wear their sling for?

- Your child should use their sling for 2 to 4 weeks. It may be useful to wear it for 4 weeks at school to remind others to be careful. They should take it off to wash and dress and do not have to wear it at night. Young children (3 years and under) may not want to wear a sling at all, and this is ok.
- 2 weeks after their injury, start to encourage your child children should be encouraged to use their injured arm for activities such as to writing, drawing, or playing computer games if these do not cause them discomfort.



Figure 1. a shoulder sling

Will my child need further (follow up) appointments?

No. We do not usually follow up children with this type of injury. However please contact the Virtual Fracture Clinic for further advice if:

- You have questions or concerns about your child's arm sling
- Your child is unable to follow this rehabilitation plan, or feels the pain is in a different joint
- Your child is struggling to regain full range of movement in their injured shoulder 4 weeks after their injury
- You would like further information or support after you have read this information.

When can my child return to high impact activities, sport, and PE?

There is a small risk of injury for up to 12 weeks, but most children over 3 years old can return to doing their usual sports at 6 weeks after their injury.

Your child should avoid high impact activities for:

- 4 weeks if they are 3 years old or younger
- 6 weeks if they are older than 3.

High impact activities include things such as trampolining, cycling, scootering, football, basketball, PE, gymnastics and most types of dances.

How do I contact the Virtual Fracture Clinic?

Working hours: Monday to Friday 8.30am to 4.30pm. We aim to respond to messages within 24 hours during these times. At times you may receive a call outside of these hours.

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01903 205111 Ext. 86312

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