



**University  
Hospitals Sussex**  
NHS Foundation Trust

# Buckle fracture of the wrist

for children who need a soft cast  
and no follow up appointment.

Physiotherapy department

**Patient information**



## What is this information about?

This information is about buckle fractures of the wrist.

### It tells you:

- How to look after your child after they have sustained a buckle fracture.
- How long to use the soft cast.
- How to remove the soft cast.
- Who to contact if you need further help and support.

## What is a buckle fracture of the wrist?

Children's bones are softer than adult bones. Sometimes they bend rather than break. This is called a buckle fracture.

They are still treated as a fracture and recover in a similar way.

## How long does this injury take to heal?

This normally takes approximately 3 to 6 weeks to heal.

It is normal for it to continue to ache a little for a few weeks after this.

Younger children normally get better quicker.

## What should I do if my child's hand is painful or swollen?

Taking pain medication and elevating (raising) their wrist will help. This is usually only needed in the first few days.

## Can my child use their arm with this injury?

It is okay to use and move the arm for normal tasks such as getting dressed, gentle play, writing.

Avoid any high impact activities where there is a chance of falling on it such as trampolining, scooters, football, bikes for 6 weeks.

## How long should my child use the soft cast for?

The soft cast helps by keeping the arm still.

They will wear the soft cast for 3 to 4 weeks. It can then be removed at home following the instructions below.

## My child reports their cast feels too tight. What should I do?

Make sure they are elevating their arm enough to keep swelling down. Check that they are still able to wriggle their fingers and they are a good colour.

If they are worried about their hand circulation or need more advice, contact the virtual Fracture Clinic or plaster room.

### Plaster room numbers:

**Worthing:** 01903 205111 Ext. 85445

**Chichester:** 01243 788122 Ext. 33393

## Will my child need a follow up appointment for this injury?

We do not normally follow up patients with this type of injury as they heal well.

If after 6 weeks your child has significant pain or swelling, please contact us using the details at the bottom of this leaflet.

## When can my child return to sport?

There is a small increased risk of injury for up to 12 weeks. However, most children can return to full sports 4 to 6 weeks post injury.

Your child can start non-contact sports such as swimming as soon as comfortable.

## What should I do if my child's symptoms change?

Please contact the Virtual Fracture Clinic Team if you have any of these symptoms:

- Increased joint pain.
- Increasing swelling with difficulty bending the fingers or thumb.
- Hypersensitivity to touching the skin.
- Shiny or red skin.
- Increased hair growth on skin.
- A sensation of the hand not belonging to you.

## How to remove the soft cast



### Removing the cast:

Cut off the cast with normal scissors.

Open the cast and slide the arm out.

If it is too difficult to cut the cast, soak the cast for 10 minutes in a basin of water or in the bath as part of bath time.



Then unroll the cast.

Find the end of the roll of the cast and unroll the coloured strip. This may need a few tugs as it will be sticky. This will not affect the healed fracture. Keep unwrapping till there is no coloured bandage left, then slip off any padding.

The bandage and padding can be thrown away in a normal bin.

## Who should I contact if I have any questions?

If you are concerned about your child's symptoms or cannot follow the instructions above, please contact the Virtual Fracture Clinic team. Our contact details are at the bottom of this leaflet.

## 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.

### Worthing

01903 205111 Ext. 86312

### St Richards

01243 788122 Ext. 35503

[uhsussex.vfc@nhs.net](mailto:uhsussex.vfc@nhs.net)





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This leaflet is intended for patients receiving care  
in St Richard's Hospital and Worthing Hospital.

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