



**University
Hospitals Sussex**
NHS Foundation Trust

Salter Harris fracture of the wrist

For children who need a cast
and a follow up appointment

Physiotherapy department

Patient information



What is this information about?

This information is about a Salter Harris fracture of the wrist. This is a specific type of fracture that occurs in children's bones.

It tells you:

- How to look after your child after they have sustained a Salter Harris fracture.
- What follow up treatment you might have.
- What exercises to do when out of the cast.
- Who to contact if you need further help and support.

How long does this injury take to heal?

This normally takes approximately 4 to 6 weeks to heal.

What should I do if my child's wrist is painful and swollen?

Your child may have swelling and pain in their wrist and hand for 3 weeks after the injury.

Swelling is often worse at the end of the day.

Taking pain medication and elevating their wrist will help in the first few days.

Elevating their wrist will help reduce swelling.

Keep their hand above the level of their heart.

They may wish to use the sling when they go out.

Can my child use their arm?

They can move their fingers, thumb, elbow and shoulder to prevent stiffness.

They should avoid any sports or high impact activities such as scooter or trampolines.

The backslab will help pain by keeping the arm still.

Does my child need follow up appointment?

They will see a specialist about 1 week after their injury.

There is a small chance that this fracture can move. Because of this, we recommend a review. This often includes a repeat X-ray. If you have not received this appointment over the next few days, please contact the Virtual Fracture Clinic using the contact details at the bottom of the leaflet.

If they need to book a follow up appointment, please contact the Virtual Fracture Clinic on **01903 205111 Ext. 85499**.

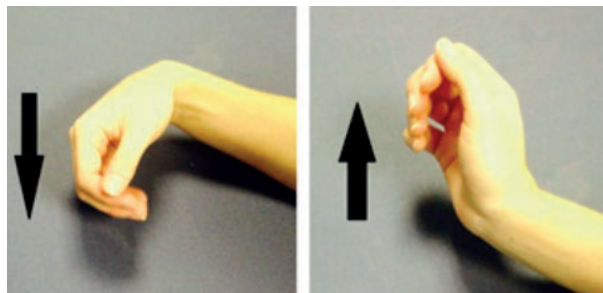
What should my child do when the cast is removed?

They will be in a cast for around 6 weeks.

Once this has been removed, they should start the exercises below to help them regain their movement.

They can start to resume normal activity but be guided by any pain that they are experiencing.

What exercises should my child practise when the cast has been removed?



Your child should move their wrist up and down.
Repeat 10 to 15 times.

What should I do if I have concerns about my child's symptoms and recovery?

If you have concerns around your child's symptoms, contact the Virtual Fracture Clinic.

If your child is struggling to recover their movement or return to activity, contact the Virtual Fracture Clinic.

The contact details for the Virtual Fracture Clinic are at the bottom of this leaflet.

What should I do if my child's cast feels too tight?

Make sure they are elevating (raising) their arm to keep the swelling down.

Check that they are still able to wriggle their fingers and they are a good colour.

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

The plaster room number is:

Worthing: 01903 205111 Ext. 85445

Chichester: 01243 788122 Ext. 33393

My child's symptoms have changed.

What do I do?

If you have any of these symptoms, please get in touch:

- Increasing 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.

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 at 4 to 6 weeks post injury. Non-contact sports such as swimming can be started as soon as your child is comfortable and no longer in a cast.

How do I contact the Virtual Fracture Clinic?

Call or leave a message on:

Worthing

01903 205111 Ext. 86312

St Richards

01243 788122 Ext. 35503

Email: 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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