

PATIENT INFORMATION

Fractured Clavicle (Collarbone)

Advice for patients, relatives and carers

A broken collarbone, or fractured clavicle, is a common injury. It usually happens after a fall or a blow to the shoulder.

In adults, it usually takes about six to eight weeks for a broken collarbone to heal, although it can take longer. In children, it usually takes about three to six weeks to heal.

However, it will take at least the same period again to restore full strength to your shoulder.

While the fracture heals, a lump may develop along the collarbone. This is normal and often improves over the following months. Occasionally, the fracture doesn't heal (non-union) and you may need to have surgery. This should be discussed with your surgeon.

Recovery advice

- Use extra pillows at night to keep yourself more upright if you find sleeping uncomfortable
- Try to move your elbow, hand and fingers regularly as soon as it's comfortable to do so
- After 2-3 weeks try removing the sling for short periods of time if it's not too painful
- Avoid contact sports for at least 10 to 12 weeks after the injury

Exercises

To move the elbow, remove your arm from the sling and try and straighten the elbow as much as possible without moving the shoulder. Do this 2-3 times a day. The wrist and fingers can be exercised while in the sling. Bend fingers to make a fist then straighten them out. Do this for about a minute every hour or two.

Move the arm gently keeping the hands at waist height e.g using keyboard or writing. Gradually increase activity or movement as pain allows.

Try using your opposite hand to support the elbow and lift your arm up to shoulder height, as pain allows. 3-4 repetitions, once or twice a day. You can do this with your arm in the sling.



After 3-4 weeks aim to lift your arm above shoulder height. You can then try the following exercises as pain allows.



If your pain gets worse or lasts more than 6 weeks, or you are concerned about your injury please contact us on: 01803 655136 (Monday-Friday 0900-1600)

There are plenty of advice videos that can be found on the web page below:

www.torbayandsouthdevon.nhs.uk/services/physiotherapy/support-videos/

Videos that may be useful are:

**“Overview of the shoulder exercise programme”
“Stage 1, 2 and 3”**

Start with stage 1 and be guided by your pain levels to progress through the stages.

If there is no improvement after 2 weeks, then you can self-refer into physiotherapy for assessment and advice.

[To refer yourself for Physiotherapy](#)

Please Call: 0300 456 9987 (local rate) Quoting the password: [WILLOW](#)

Monday-Friday 08:30 – 12:00 noon (excluding bank holidays)

Or visit: www.torbayandsouthdevon.nhs.uk/physiopkb

For further assistance or to receive this information in a different format, please contact the department which created this leaflet.

