

Patient Information Sheet - X-ray Confirmed Scaphoid Fractures

What do I need to know?

What has happened?

We suspect you may have broken (fractured) a small bone in your wrist. The type of injury you have suffered is painful but almost always heals without the need for surgery. A cast is usually sufficient to manage this type of injury and allow healing.

What does my X-ray look like?



What happens next?

You will be called and invited to attend a fracture clinic in approximately one week's time. If you don't hear in the next 5 days please call the number overleaf.

What should I expect during recovery?

You will have a cast for a minimum of 6 weeks. Occasionally, a longer period is required if your fracture is slow to heal.

Weeks 1 and 2

- The wrist will be painful but it should be tolerable while it is secured in the cast with normal sensation in your fingers. Paracetamol can help this.
- Begin EXERCISES 1-2 as illustrated.
- You may notice some bruising and swelling in the fingers and some mild tingling / numbness.

Weeks 3-6

- The pain will begin to reduce and bruising will settle.
- You can start to use your hand for light day to day activities but no heavy lifting.

Weeks 7-12

- Once you come out of cast the wrist will feel unusual to begin with and that is normal.
- Begin EXERCISES 3-8. Repeat x10 each, x3 times pre day for 4 weeks once you have taken off the cast.

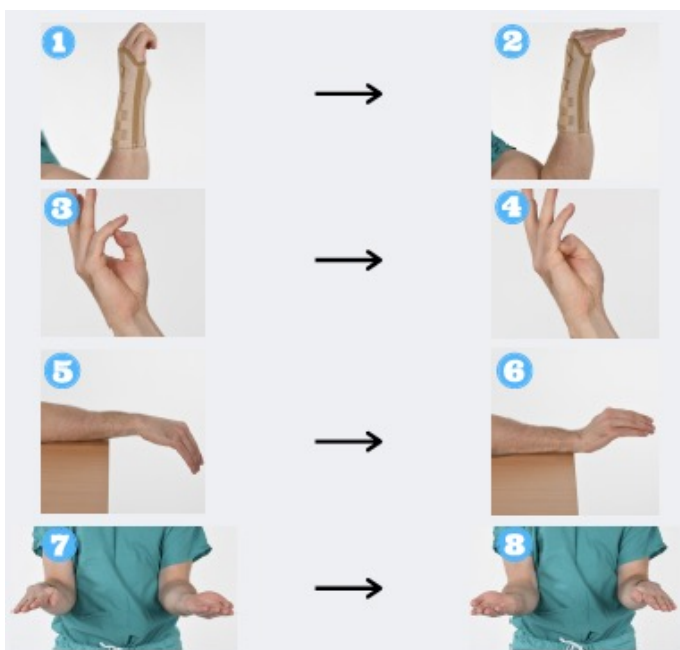
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Why do I not need surgery?

The scaphoid normally heals well without the need for surgery. However, surgery is occasionally required in certain circumstances. If these apply to you, your surgeon will discuss them with you.

Key Exercises



Top Tips

- Elevate your wrist above the level of your heart when you are at home to reduce swelling.
- Keep your fingers, elbow and shoulder moving despite your wrist being immobilised.
- Stop or cut down on smoking while the bone is healing (smoking has been proven to slow healing and increase the risk of 'non-union' (when the bone doesn't heal)).

Get In Touch

Please get in touch via our trauma advice email: traumaenquiriesRIE@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk if you have queries regarding your wrist, for example:

- Your cast becomes wet and loose or you are concerned about the pain or function of your wrist.

If you do not receive a reply after 3 working days call our helpline in hours (8am-5pm): 0131 2423410

Urgent Issues

Please call the Minor Injuries Unit helpline on 0131 2423942 of any urgent issues, for example:

- There is a sudden, severe, constant increase in the pain in your wrist.
- The cast feels very tight and constricting around your thumb/fingers with increased swelling of the thumb/fingers.
- Rubbing on the skin.
- You have progressive worsening numbness in the tips of your fingers or thumb.