

Feedback

We appreciate and encourage feedback. If you need advice or are concerned about any aspect of care or treatment please speak to a member of staff or contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS):

Freephone: 0800 183 0204

From abroad: +44 115 924 9924 ext 65412 or 62301

Deaf and hard of hearing: text 07812 270003

E-mail: pals@nuh.nhs.uk

Letter: NUH NHS Trust, c/o PALS, Freepost NEA 14614, Nottingham NG7 1BR

www.nuh.nhs.uk



You can also scan the QR code to leave patient, family or carer feedback. After scanning the QR code please go to 'How can I leave my feedback' and select the service that you have accessed and then follow the on screen prompts.

If you require a full list of references for this leaflet please email patientinformation@nuh.nhs.uk or phone 0115 924 9924 ext. 67184.

The Trust endeavours to ensure that the information given here is accurate and impartial.



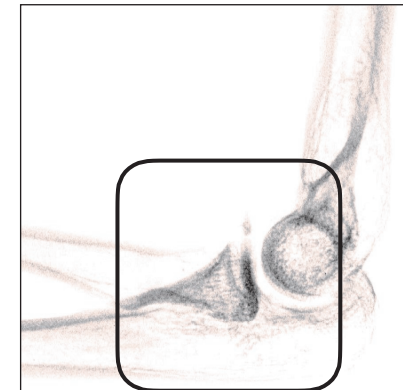
**Nottingham
Orthopaedics**

NHS
Nottingham
University Hospitals
NHS Trust

Undisplaced Radial Head Fracture

Information for patients

Fracture Clinic



This document can be provided in different languages and formats. For more information please contact:

Fracture Clinic
QMC
Derby Road, Nottingham
Tel: 0115 924 9924 ext 61260

Your diagnosis

You have an injury called a **radial head fracture**. This is a break in one of the bones just below the elbow. It is usually very painful and swells due to bleeding from the broken bone.

Treatment

Your fracture does not require surgery. This type of fracture is not treated in a plaster cast as this is not necessary and will make your elbow very stiff. You will be provided with a sling to wear for a few weeks and can safely move your elbow without causing any damage. It is important you **start moving your elbow as soon as possible** as it will initially be very stiff. Early movement will speed up your recovery. It usually takes six weeks for the fracture to heal and you should avoid heavy lifting and contact sports in this time.

Recovery

It will take a long time to recover from your injury. By three months you should have reasonably normal day to day function but you may still not have your full range of movement. Movements can improve for up to a year following this injury. It is common not to be able to fully straighten your elbow permanently, though day to day use of your arm will ultimately not be affected. You should take simple over the counter painkillers to improve the pain to allow you to move the elbow. Speak to your GP or pharmacist if you need advice on what painkillers to take.

Can I work or drive?

You may be able to drive provided you feel you are safe to operate the vehicle. You should contact your insurance company to check they have no stipulations before driving.

Depending on your job you may be able to work, though heavy work will not be possible for at least six weeks. Your GP can provide a medical certificate if necessary.

What can't I do?

You should avoid heavy lifting until 6-8 weeks after your fracture and the pain has subsided.

Notes

Contact us

Physiotherapy

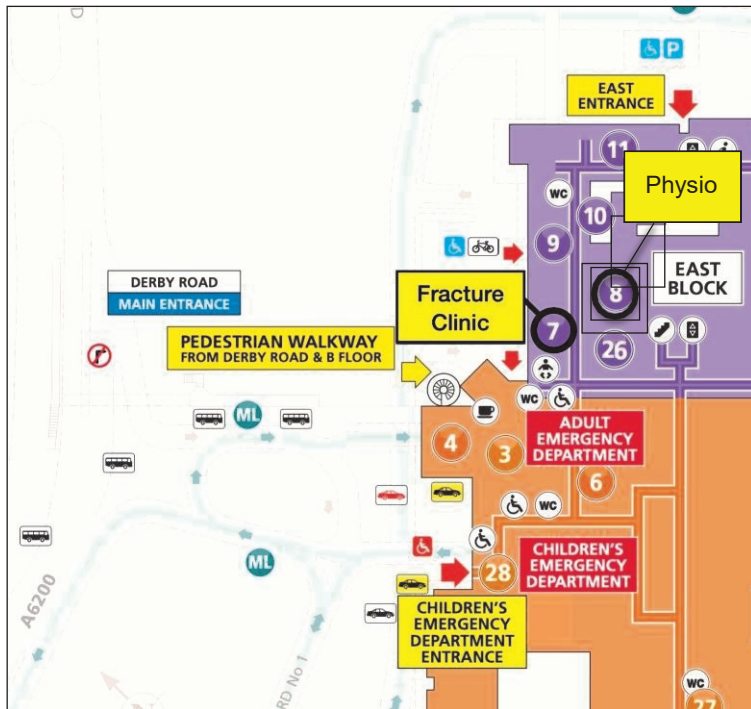
You will have an open appointment in the physiotherapy department. If you feel you are not making appropriate progress with your **movements** or **pain** then please get in contact for a face to face appointment:

If you need to get in touch please call **0115 849 3312** between 8am and 4pm, Monday to Friday.

Fracture Clinic

If there is another problem with your progress following your injury you can book in for a face to face appointment with the fracture clinic to see a doctor:

If you need to get in touch please call **0115 924 9924 ext: 61260** between 8am and 5pm, Monday to Friday.



Exercises

Exercises should be started as soon as possible. It may be beneficial to take pain relief 30-60 minutes before attempting these exercises. We suggest that the following exercises are held for 10 seconds and each repeated 10 times.

1. Regularly stretch your injured arm up towards the ceiling to prevent your shoulder getting stiff. You can use your uninjured arm to help as shown below.



2. Bend and straighten your elbow as much as you are able. It is recommended you do this lying down initially with your elbow supported on a rolled towel so you can relax.



- Turn your palm up and down keeping your elbow tucked in to your side. You may find this is more comfortable to do if you rest your arm on a table while you do it.



Progression for once your pain is controlled:

- Apply gentle pressure with your other hand to both straighten and bend your elbow until you feel a 'stretch'. Hold the stretch for 10 seconds.



You should try and perform each exercise 5-10 times each hour.

Exercise videos

If you have access to the internet through your smartphone or computer you can access our online advice videos for exercises. Scan the QR codes below or use the link provided.

Initial Exercises	Exercise Progression
https://qrs.ly/hwbyug5	https://qrs.ly/74byugy
	

Key points

- If you feel you are failing to make satisfactory progress with your elbow movements by four weeks please contact the physiotherapy department. If at three months you have stiffness or a 'clunking' sensation please refer yourself to the fracture clinic.
- Take regular pain relief if required. Usually over the counter medications are sufficient but if you have any concerns see your GP or Pharmacist to advise you what to take and how often.
- If you experience any persistent pins and needles or numbness in your fingers please contact the fracture clinic.
- Remember your elbow may permanently lose a small amount of movement on bending and straightening.