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Caring for your clavicle fracture

***Information for
children, parents and carers***



Royal Aberdeen Children's Hospital

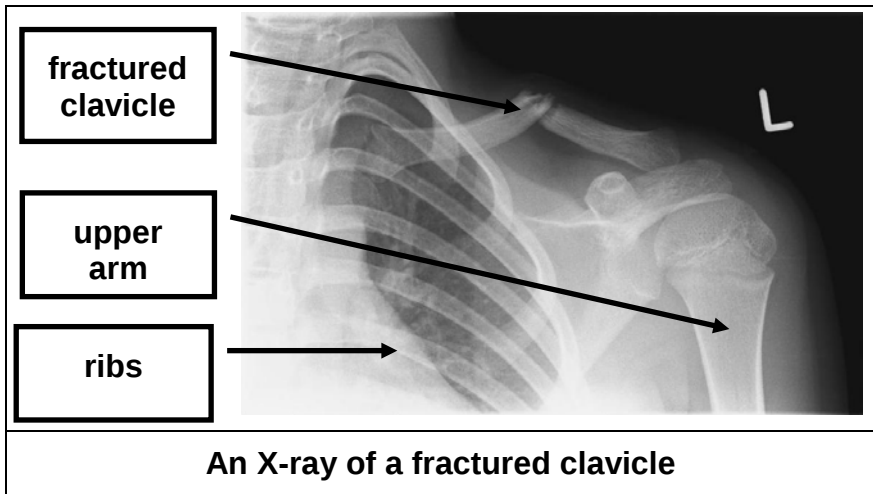
What is a clavicle fracture?

The clavicle (also called the collar bone) is a long and slender bone that is located between the ribcage and the shoulder blade.

Clavicle fractures are often caused by a direct blow to the shoulder or result from a fall on to an outstretched arm.

Clavicle fractures are common in children but they heal well with no specific treatment or follow-up and do not result in long term problems.

Normal healing takes 3 to 4 weeks in children and 5 to 6 weeks in adolescents.



How is it treated?

The injured arm will be placed in a sling and your child should be given simple pain relief such as paracetamol or ibuprofen.

To protect the clavicle from further injury the sling should be worn under clothes for the first two weeks.

After the first 2 weeks, wear the sling over clothes, as required for comfort, for the following 1 to 2 weeks. In an older child, they may need up to 6 weeks in the sling.

During this time the sling can be removed to allow bathing and showering and does not need to be worn in bed.

When your child's sling is not being worn, encourage your child to straighten their elbow and move their wrist to avoid stiffness.

What should I expect?

- It may be more comfortable for your child to sleep upright in bed for the first few nights.
- Some discomfort may last for up to 6 weeks.
- Often a pronounced “bump” will appear at the fracture site due to the bone healing. This is normal and will reduce in size over the next 2 years as your child continues to grow.
- Most often this will disappear completely but in some adolescents a small bump can remain permanently.

Will my child need physiotherapy?

Children very rarely need physiotherapy for this injury however you should encourage them to move their shoulder as they are able.

When can they return to sports?

Non-contact sports such as swimming and running can be performed as soon as your child feels able to do so. This usually takes 3 to 4 weeks.

Avoid contact sports such as rugby, football or basketball for 6 weeks. Your child can return to playing these sports gradually after this time.

Contact telephone number

If you have any worries or concerns, or if your child still has significant pain after 6 weeks, please contact the Emergency Department. We will make an appointment for your child's injury to be reviewed.

**Emergency Department
Royal Aberdeen Children's Hospital**

 (01224) 552041 

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