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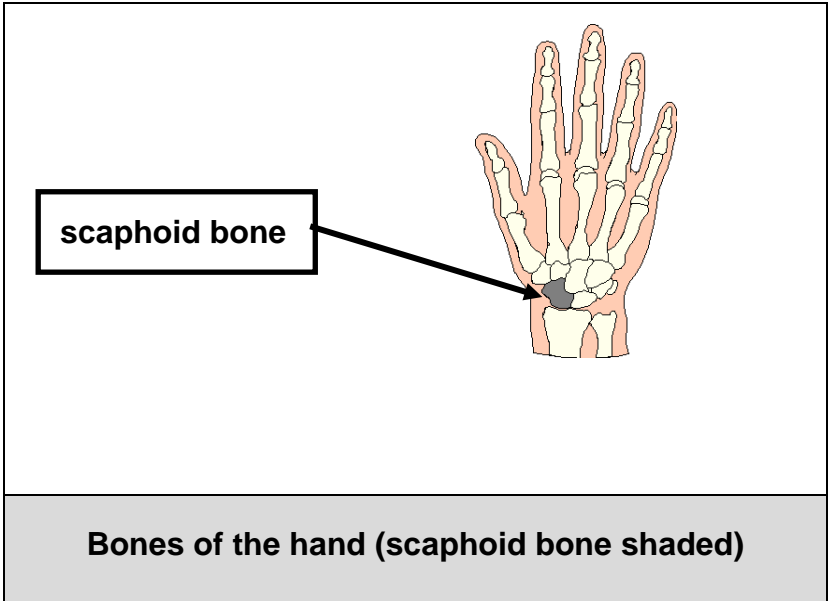


Suspected scaphoid fracture

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



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



What is a scaphoid fracture?

The scaphoid is a small but important bone in the palm of the hand, at the base of the thumb (see diagram opposite). It is often injured after a fall on to the outstretched hand.

The scaphoid has a limited blood supply so clinicians are very careful with these injuries and often treat anyone with any suspicion of a fracture as if they **do** have a fracture.

Why don't you know if the scaphoid is broken?

If we've identified a fracture, we'll treat your child as a **confirmed** fracture (which has a different treatment plan).

Occasionally, fractures of the scaphoid do not show up on the first series of X-rays that we do. Therefore, as mentioned above, we often treat an injury as a fracture until we are happy that things are improving.

Fortunately, most of these injuries turn out not to be a fracture and the symptoms settle with no specific treatment or follow-up and do not result in long term problems.

How is it treated?

Wearing a thumb splint

We place your child's injured hand in an extended thumb splint for 2 weeks. You can give your child regular simple pain relief such as paracetamol or ibuprofen, always following the instructions on the bottle or packet.

During this time, you can remove your child's splint when they are bathing and showering. It is a good idea to encourage them to keep moving their fingers (but not their thumb) to avoid stiffness.

After wearing the splint for 2 weeks

After the first 2 weeks, you can take off the splint. The wrist and thumb may feel stiff. Any pain should be getting better by this stage and your child can gradually get back to normal activities over the following weeks.

If there is still pain after 2 weeks

If your child continues to have pain on pressure or wrist movement or if pain is worsening when the splint comes off then get in touch. Please call us on the number on page 4 of this leaflet to arrange a review appointment.

Explain to the receptionist that you need an Orthopaedic “Clinical Scaphoid Follow-Up Appointment”. **You should reapply the splint and use it until you are seen in the clinic.**

What should we expect?

- Your child should avoid rough play and sports for the time they are in the splint/strapping. It is important they are careful at school especially at break times.
- Some discomfort may last for up to 2 weeks after the splint comes off but this should **gradually improve**.

Will they need physiotherapy?

Once the splint comes off, encourage your child to move their hand and wrist as much they are able. After this type of injury, children very rarely need physiotherapy.

When can they return to sports?

Non-contact sports such as swimming and running can be started once the splint comes off.

Your child should avoid contact sports such as rugby, football or basketball for 2 weeks after the splint comes off. They can return to playing these sports **gradually** after this time.

Contact telephone number

If you have any concerns or if your child still has significant pain after 4 weeks, please contact us on the number below. We'll then arrange an appointment to review their progress.

**Emergency Department
Royal Aberdeen Children's Hospital
Westburn Road
Aberdeen
AB25 2ZG**

 01224 552041

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Feedback from the public helped us to develop this leaflet.
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Emergency Department
Royal Aberdeen Children's Hospital
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