

# Discharge advice for a radial head/neck (elbow) fracture



Issued by the orthopaedic department

You have a very small break at your elbow. This is in the radial head, or neck, of the bones in your elbow.

These fractures almost always heal well with time and use. No specific treatment is needed, therefore routine follow-up is not required.

## What happens next?

An orthopaedic trauma consultant (a doctor who specialises in fractures) will review your x-rays. If any other treatment is needed, or if we need to see you for review in the fracture clinic you will be contacted by phone or letter in the next five working days.

If nothing further is required we will not contact you, however if you have any concerns please call the helpline number in this booklet.

## Collar and cuff

A sling (collar and cuff) will hold your elbow in a comfortable position for a few days.

You should wean yourself off this as your pain settles and aim to remove the sling completely as soon as you feel able.

## Painkillers

We suggest paracetamol and ibuprofen, if you can take them, ask your pharmacist for advice.

## When can I return to regular activity?

Symptoms are usually minor, but may take up to 3- 6 weeks to settle.

You may initially require regular painkillers, as it is important to keep gently moving the elbow.

You should gradually resume daily activities, as you are able to.

This will prevent stiffness and ensure the quickest return to normal function.

You may be left with very minor residual bend in the elbow, which will not affect how you use your arm.

Forcible stretching is unnecessary, and is likely to cause pain and delay your recovery.

We wish you a speedy recovery.

If you have any worries or concerns, please contact us on the helpline:

**Monday - Friday, 9am - 3:30pm 01670 529431**

**After hours and weekends, if you need urgent advice contact:**

**Wansbeck General Hospital 01670 529884**

**North Tyneside Hospital 0191 2932515**

**Northumbria Specialist  
Emergency Care Hospital 0191 6072100**

## Alternative Formats

If you would like a copy of this information in large print, another language, audio tape or other format please call the Contact Centre on 03 44 811 8118.

## Other sources of information

### NHS 111

### NHS Choices

[www.nhs.uk/pages/homepage.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/pages/homepage.aspx)

### NICE (National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence)

[www.nice.org.uk](http://www.nice.org.uk)

### Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

Freephone: 0800 032 0202

Text: 07815 500015

Email: [northoftynepals@nhct.nhs.uk](mailto:northoftynepals@nhct.nhs.uk)

### Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

General Enquiries 03 44 811 8111

[www.northumbria.nhs.uk](http://www.northumbria.nhs.uk)



PIN 680/V4

Review date: March 2024

© This material is the copyright of the Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust.