

# Fracture of the Clavicle

Paediatric Unit Information for parents and carers

Abi Ife, Business Manager, Integrated Business Unit

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## Fracture (break) of the Clavicle (collar bone)

This leaflet aims to answer some of the questions that you or your child may have about managing a clavicle (collar bone) fracture.

### What is a clavicle (collar bone) fracture?

Your child has sustained a “fracture” of their collar bone. The clavicle is a strut bone connecting part of your sternum (breast bone) to your scapula (shoulder blade). It is one of the most common bones to injure. This has been caused by falling onto the arm, or shoulder. The good news is that all these fractures in children heal well with simple common sense advice and instructions.

### What is the treatment?

The best way to treat the initial pain and discomfort is to place the injured arm in a sling that allows the bruising and bone time to heal. The sling should be worn during the day for 2-3 weeks. At night you should place a soft pillow in between the arm and body for comfort. You should give your child regular pain killers for the first few days and then as required.

### When it is time to remove the sling:

- Do make sure that your child is calm and that you are not rushed or distracted.
- Allow your child to gently and slowly move the arm.
- Once the sling comes off, the arm should be pain-free, although it may be slightly stiff from being in a sling and your child may be a little unsure to start with.
- If the arm is still painful after three weeks, then replace the sling and contact us at the Orthopaedic Fracture Clinic on: 07391016314 Monday to Thursday 9.00am-5.00pm, Friday 09.00am-12.30pm Bank Holidays 9.00am-12.30pm. If you feel more urgent attention is needed, then contact your GP, the NHS 111 service or take your child to the Emergency Department.

Sporting activities, physical education (PE) and rough play should be avoided for another 3 weeks (total of 6 weeks from injury).

### Fracture of the clavicle

Things to be aware of early on in the treatment:

- Your child may have slight pain in their collar bone. This will settle within a few days. It may be helpful to ease your child’s discomfort with simple painkillers such as paracetamol or ibuprofen. These should be used as directed on the packet or by your pharmacist. If your child’s pain is not relieved despite these, or if the pain does not begin to improve after one week, then please seek medical advice.
- There may also be mild swelling or a bump at the fracture site. The bump over the fracture is quite normal and is produced by healing bone. It may take up to one year to disappear. If your child is older than 10 years a small bump may remain.

## Frequently asked questions:

### Can the sling be removed during wash/bath time?

It is advisable not to remove the sling for the first 3-4 days unless you have a concern. After this the sling can be removed for washing and bath times as long as no direct pressure is placed through the arm. If your child feels any discomfort, replace the sling and try again in a day or two.

### Can my child go back to school / playgroup with the sling on?

Yes, but do make sure that the school or playgroup are aware that the arm is injured so they take appropriate care.

### Once the sling is off can they go back to all activities?

No. Climbing, swinging and high impact activities should be avoided for a further 3 weeks.

### What should we do with the sling once it has been removed?

It is best to keep the sling safe for a few days to make sure there is no further need for it. After this, the sling can be thrown away.

### What should I do if my child keeps removing the sling?

In the first 2 weeks we advise that the sling should be kept on. If after the second week your child keeps removing the sling and appears to be completely pain free and willing to use the arm and hand normally, leave the sling off and monitor them. It is more than likely that the fracture has healed sufficiently.

If the pain gets worse or lasts more than 3 weeks, or if you are concerned following discharge from hospital, please contact:

Fracture Clinic on: **07391 016314** (Monday to Thursday 9.00am-5.00pm,  
Friday 09.00am-12.30pm, Bank Holidays 9.00am-12.30pm).

The NHS Out of Hours 111 service can also assist you outside of these times.

## Feedback

We want your visit to be as comfortable as possible. Please talk to the person in charge if you have any concerns. If the ward/ department staff are unable to resolve your concern, please ask for our Patient Advice and Liaison (PALS) information. Please be assured that raising a concern will not impact on your care. **Before you leave the hospital you will be asked to complete a Friends and Family Test feedback card.** Providing your feedback is vital in helping to transform NHS services and to support patient choice.

## Trust Values

### Courtesy and respect

- A welcoming and positive attitude
- Polite, friendly and interested in people
- Value and respect people as individuals  
So people feel **welcome**

### Attentively kind and helpful

- Look out for dignity, privacy & humanity
- Attentive, responsive & take time to help
- Visible presence of staff to provide care  
So people feel **cared for**

### Responsive communication

- Listen to people & answer their questions
- Keep people clearly informed
- Involve people  
So people feel **in control**
- Effective and professional
- Safe, knowledgeable and reassuring
- Effective care / services from joined up teams
- Organised and timely, looking to improve  
So people feel **safe**



The hospital can arrange for an interpreter or person to sign to assist you in communicating effectively with staff during your stay. Please let us know.

For a large print version of this leaflet, contact PALS 01493 453240