

Buckle fractures (wrist) in children

Information for children, families and carers

We have given you this factsheet because your child has sustained an injury to their wrist called a buckle fracture. It explains what a buckle fracture is and how it is treated. We hope it will help to answer some of the questions you may have. If you have any further questions or concerns, please contact us using the details at the end of this factsheet.

What is a buckle fracture?

A buckle fracture is a type of injury that occurs when one side of the bone bends or is compressed (or 'squashed') but the other side remains intact. This can result in a bump in the bone, rather than a complete break.

What causes this type of injury?

A buckle fracture is a common injury in children and young people because their bones are softer than adult bones. It is usually caused by a fall onto an out-stretched hand (FOOSH). Buckle fractures can happen from falls off scooters, skates or monkey bars, as well as direct hits in contact sports like football or rugby.

How is this type of injury treated?

A buckle fracture is treated as a sprain, rather than a broken bone. Like sprains, buckle fractures heal well on their own without causing any long-term complications and do not need a plaster cast.

Splint or bandage

We may give your child a splint or a bandage to wear for up to three weeks, but they can remove this at any time.

There has been a recent large study in the UK, called the FORCE study, that has researched how best to treat buckle fracture injuries. The study showed that children who were offered a bandage for their buckle fracture healed well and as comfortably as those who had a splint. Some of the children chose not to wear a bandage or a splint and their fractures also healed well.

Pain relief medication

Your child may experience some mild stiffness and aching in their wrist for a few weeks after their injury. Regular pain relief medications, such as paracetamol (Calpol®) and ibuprofen, will help to ease their discomfort. Always check the label before giving your child any over-the-counter medications.

Are there any complications?

It is uncommon for children to experience any complications with a buckle fracture.

When can my child resume their normal daily activities?

Your child can resume their normal daily activities as soon as their pain and discomfort eases (usually three to four weeks after the injury).

Will my child need any follow-up care?

Most children will not need any follow-up care for a buckle fracture.

When should I seek medical help?

Contact us if your child experiences:

- an extraordinary amount of pain.
- any tingling or altered sensation (pins and needles) in their injured wrist.

Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us.

Children's outpatient department

Telephone: **023 8120 4477** (Monday to Friday, 8am to 4.30pm)

Email: paedorthopaedics@uhs.nhs.uk

Useful links

www.force-dissemination.digitrial.com

www.uhs.nhs.uk/for-patients/patient-information-leaflets

www.healthiertogether.nhs.uk

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