

Buckle fracture wrist injury

Information for children, families and carers

You have been given this factsheet because your child has an injury affecting their wrist bone which your doctor has diagnosed as a 'buckle fracture'. This factsheet explains how buckle fractures are treated and aims to answer any questions you may have.

What is a buckle fracture?

A buckle fracture occurs when one side of the bone bends or is compressed (or 'squashed') but the other side remains intact. Buckle fractures are common in children because their bones are softer than adult bones. This makes them more likely to compress, rather than suffer a complete break, after an impact.

What treatment is needed?

Like sprains, buckle fractures heal well by themselves without causing any long-term problems. Your child will not need any special treatment.

Your child does not require a splint or a plaster cast for a buckle fracture but they may choose to wear a bandage, which they can stop using at any time.

A large scientific study that took place throughout the UK, called the FORCE study, investigated how best to treat buckle fracture injuries. This study showed that children who were offered a bandage (which not all of them chose to wear) healed well and were equally as comfortable as those who were treated in a hard splint or cast.

When can my child use their wrist and hand again?

- Most children start to use their wrist and hand comfortably again after around 2 weeks. They should be allowed to use their hand as much as they want, but should not do anything that causes them pain or discomfort.
- If the child wears a bandage on their wrist then this should be removed whenever the wrist becomes more comfortable – and certainly by 3 weeks.
- Your child can return to sporting activities, physical exercise and rough play as soon as the pain and discomfort settles.

Pain and discomfort

- When moving their wrist in the next few weeks your child may complain of mild stiffness and aching. This is normal and should settle down within a few days. They may require simple pain relief medicines, these can be purchased over the counter at a pharmacy.
- You may find that using a cold compress and elevating the limb whenever they are resting in the first few days can help with pain relief and swelling.

Follow up appointments

We should not need to see your child again for their buckle injury.

All your child's x-rays will be reviewed by a specialist to check your child has been given the right treatment and ensure there are no other problems. They will contact you if they have any concerns, so please ensure that we have your correct contact details.

Things to look out for when your child goes home

- Your child may have discomfort in their wrist which should settle over a few days.
- If you have ongoing concerns, please contact your GP or return to the Emergency Department for review.

More information

For more details about the treatment of this injury visit: www.FORCEstudy.org

Contact us

University Hospital Southampton NHS Foundation Trust
Tremona Road
Southampton
SO16 6YD
Telephone: **023 8077 7222** (main switchboard)

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