Wrist Fracture Advice

NB (A fracture is the same as a break)
The plaster is not removed until the broken bone is healed.
What symptoms may I experience?

1. Pain – this may be due to stiffness of the tissues around the area of injury.

2. Swelling – due to the support of the plaster being removed your wrist may swell and feel stiff.

3. Shoulder/Elbow/Wrist Stiffness and Muscle Weakness – due to lack of use of the arm.

4. Dry Skin/Excess Hair Growth – due to being in the cast for some weeks.

5. Normal daily tasks are difficult.
1. **PAIN** – painkillers can be helpful - speak to your pharmacist or GP about appropriate medication. Warm water soaks before exercise can help relieve pain and stiffness.

2. **SWELLING AND STIFFNESS** – keep your hand above the level of your heart when resting. Move your arm and hand as shown in the exercise section.

3. **DRY SKIN/EXCESSIVE HAIR GROWTH** – wash the arm and hand with warm water. Use a bland moisturiser (aqueous cream) for the first few days. Excessive hair growth is normal after coming out of plaster and will resolve in time.

4. **DIFFICULTY WITH NORMAL DAILY TASKS** – your strength and flexibility needs to build up before tackling heavy tasks (e.g. carrying full kettle/pots).
It is important to regain the strength and movement in your wrist as soon as possible.

The exercises are designed to increase the movement and strength of your wrist and to prevent your shoulder and elbow becoming stiff.

It is normal to feel some discomfort when moving your wrist initially, but this will reduce with time.

The following exercises should be carried out 5 times every 2 hours. Take each exercise as far as you can then hold for 5 seconds.

- Palm down move your wrist forward/back
- Forearm supported turn
- Palm vertical move wrist
- Take thumb to little finger
- Stretch hand out wide
- Clench fingers
Clasp hands and lift hands above your head

Reach hand behind your head

Reach behind back

Bend and straighten your elbow
Will my wrist get back to normal?

Your ability to carry out daily tasks will improve with time. Use your hand for normal tasks as able but avoid the “Hot, Heavy and Dangerous” tasks to begin with.

You should not drive until you have recovered good wrist movement.

You can return to work when you feel able to carry out your duties. This may be immediately if you have a non-manual job or longer if you do heavy, manual work.

Your movement and strength will improve over several months and will continue to improve for up to a year. It is important to continue with your exercises and not give up.

If you feel you need further help and have not already been referred to a physiotherapist, contact your GP.

Contact details

Physiotherapy Department
Stirling Community Hospital 01786 434061
Forth Valley Royal Hospital 01324 566600
Patient Appointments/Cancellations

If you have an enquiry about an appointment or would like to cancel it, please call 01324 566249 or email: FV-UHB.RTT@nhs.net

If you can’t go let us know!
Every month around 2,000 people across Forth Valley fail to turn up for hospital appointments. This costs the NHS millions of pounds each year and increases waiting times. So if you are unable to attend or no longer require your hospital appointment please let us know so we can offer it to someone else.

We are happy to consider requests for this publication in other languages or formats such as large print. Please call 01324 590886 (24hrs), fax 01324 590867 or email FV-UHB.disabilitydepartment@nhs.net

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