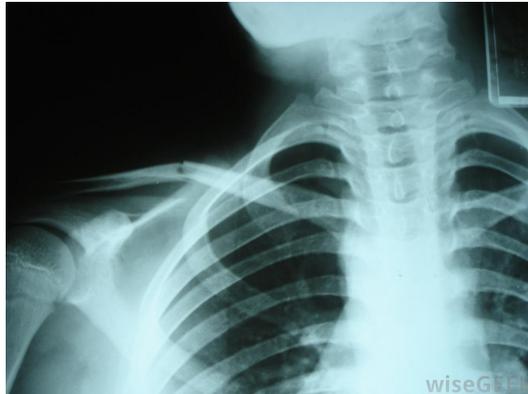


## Clavicle/ Collar Bone Fracture

**The information in this leaflet is to help you understand your injury and the best way to manage it.**

There are many terms that can be used to describe your injury. The common ones are fracture, break and crack – they all mean the same thing. When you have an injury like yours not just the bone is affected. You will also have injured some of the soft tissues around it. Soft tissues include the muscles, ligaments, tendons and nerves.



### Recovery Times

This injury takes between 6 – 12 weeks to heal.

It is not unusual to have aches and discomfort beyond this. It can be normal for the area is more sensitive for months.

### Things that could affect your recovery

#### Smoking

Smoking slows fracture healing times. In some people, it can stop healing altogether. Smoking affects all your tissues. Stopping smoking during the healing phase of your fracture will help ensure the best recovery.

For help to stop smoking see (<https://www.nhsinform.scot/healthy-living/stopping-smoking>)

#### General Health

Some medical conditions may slow down the healing e.g. diabetes

Eating a healthy diet and keeping yourself active will help your recovery

#### Medication

Some medications you are already taking can slow down fracture healing. If you have concerns about your medication talk to a health professional.

Anti-inflammatory medication (such as ibuprofen, naproxen) can delay healing.

## What to expect

Following your X-ray and diagnosis you will be managed in a polysling. Please follow this link to see how to apply and remove your sling ([hyperlink](#))

Weeks since injury	Rehabilitation Plan
0-3	Wear sling during the day except for exercises and personal hygiene It is your choice if you wear your sling at night Start the 'initial exercises' in this leaflet straight away Do not lift your elbow above shoulder height as this may be painful
3-6	Try not to use the sling Begin normal light activities with the arm and shoulder Increase movement as shown in stage 2 exercises Avoid heavy lifting for the full 6 weeks
6-12	The injury should be healed Resume normal day to day activities but be guided by any pain that you experience Start to lift your arm overhead Heavy tasks may cause discomfort No contact sport until AFTER 12 weeks

### Swelling

It is normal to have swelling near the fracture site. It often spreads down your arm. The amount of swelling can change with your position, activity or the time of day. This can in some cases last for months. It is important that the swelling is managed well to aid your recovery.

#### How can I help swelling?

Keep the other joints in your arm moving normally.

Find a balance between rest and activity

Use self massage to decrease swelling gently pushing the fluid from your fingertips towards your shoulder.

### Pain

It is normal to have some discomfort in the areas around your fracture. The areas affected can be:

- Other soft tissues
- Nearby joints
- Areas which have been immobilised

Pain changes from day to day, it doesn't always depend on what you are doing. It is not unusual to have pain at rest. It is normal to have some pain even when your fracture has healed

**Should I take painkillers after a fracture?** Click on this link for advice about painkillers

<https://cks.nice.org.uk/analgesia-mild-to-moderate-pain#!scenario>

### Bruising

It is normal to have bruising. Bruising can be widespread and appear a long way from your fracture. It changes colour as it recovers and can be very purple to start with.

## Getting back to normal activities

### Driving

It is your responsibility to ensure you are in full control of your vehicle. Your injury may affect your insurance and you should contact your insurer before driving.

Once you are out of your moonboot, cast or sling the general advice is you must be able to safely perform an emergency stop or manoeuvre.

You should always be in full control of your vehicle.

### Work

Your return to work will depend on the type of work you do and your employer. It may be possible to discuss a phased return to work, changed duties etc. You don't need to see a health care professional to return to work.

### Daily Activities

Keep doing any activities you are able, as your pain allows. Gradually increase what you do. Reduced flexibility and strength may make things more difficult to start with. This will get better as you slowly build up to all your usual activities.

### Mood

Frustration or low mood after your injury is normal, as you get back to normal life this will get better.

### Falls

Loss of confidence is common after a fracture; here are some links that may help

<https://www.nhsinform.scot/campaigns/falls>

<https://www.csp.org.uk/publications/get-and-go-guide-supplement-six-exercises-staying-steady>

### Bone scanning

You may be sent a letter inviting you for a scan of your bone density. This is routine if you fit the criteria and is nothing to worry about.

## Exercises for your shoulder

It is safe to follow these exercises for your injured shoulder and one to regain your balance. Timescales for this are below.

### Initial exercises to do 4-5 times a day:

<https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/muscle-bone-and-joints/exercises/exercises-for-elbow-problems>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KDci8veiYml>

<https://www.csp.org.uk/publications/get-and-go-guide-supplement-six-exercises-staying-steady>

