



Information for patients, relatives and carers

Fractured Neck of Humerus

You have been put in a collar and cuff sling because you have broken the long bone of your upper arm. The weight of the arm keeps the bone in the right place so you do not need a plaster of Paris.

Your forearm and hand may be swollen and bruised for a number of weeks; this is normal. This can be a painful injury so take your pain relief medication regularly as prescribed by your clinician.

You may find that you are more comfortable sleeping sitting upright for the first few nights.

While in the sling, it is important to encourage circulation by clenching your fist and then spreading the fingers and thumb out, several times each hour. You may find it easier to squeeze and let go of a bath sponge or soft ball.

After One Week

Take your arm out of the collar and cuff and let the elbow straighten fully, then bend fully six times. This should be repeated at least three times a day and the collar and cuff reapplied afterwards.

All the following exercises should be taken to the point of discomfort. **Do NOT exercise into the pain!**

After Three Weeks

Or sooner if it feels comfortable, bend forward (holding onto a support e.g. chair back, with the good hand) and swing injured arm gently:

- forwards and backwards
- side to side
- round in circles

Progress from this point to placing fingers on the injured shoulder with the elbow fully bent:

- lift point of elbow forward
- lift point of elbow to the side
- lift point of elbow backwards

As you get stronger you will be able to do this with your arm straight.

Do:

Encourage the circulation in the injured arm by warmth and gentle exercise, little and often.

Do not:

Allow the hand to hang loosely by your side for very long, as the hand will tend to swell.

It can take around twelve weeks for the bone to heal and reach full strength after breaking it. Therefore, until then **do not:**

- lift heavy suitcases/bags
- lift heavy, full saucepans or kettles
- go back to contact sport

① If you have further concerns about your condition, please contact your GP. If you are not sure what to do, call 111 or get help from 111 online: <https://111.nhs.uk/> [When to use NHS 111 - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS): We can listen to feedback (positive or negative), answer questions and help resolve any concerns about Trust services. PALS can be contacted on 01904 726262, or email pals@york.nhs.uk. An answer phone is available out of hours.

Leaflets in alternative languages or formats: If you require this information in a different language or format, for example Braille, large print, Easy Read or audio, please ask the staff who are looking after you.

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