



Information for patients, relatives and carers

Pulled Elbow

Your child has sustained a 'Pulled Elbow'. This is a problem which commonly occurs in children under the age of six years.

It can happen during a game such as swinging the child by the hands, when helping the child to their feet or when a child stumbles whilst walking along holding on to an adult's hand. It does not mean that anyone has pulled too hard on the child's arm. Some children are simply susceptible to this injury because of the shape of their developing bones.

The child will stop using their arm and can be very upset.

The problem can usually be solved easily in the Emergency Department by manipulating the elbow. The child normally makes a quick recovery.

When you get home the child may not need any painkillers, but if they do seem to have some discomfort in the arm a dose of paracetamol and/or ibuprofen would be appropriate.

The child should regain full movement of their arm within two days. If you have any concern that the child's arm has not recovered by this time, please contact your GP or return to your nearest Emergency Department.

Please try to avoid any activity which will cause a pull on the elbow in the future. Using reins when out walking can help.

The child is at risk of this recurring until they are around five years old.

If the problem happens again you will need to go to the nearest Emergency Department for the elbow to be manipulated.

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 online or call 111 - NHS (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 yhs-tr.PatientExperienceTeam@nhs.net.

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.

Date this version published	May 2025
Review Date	May 2028
Document Reference	PIL650 v5, Pulled Elbow

© 2025 York and Scarborough Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. All Rights reserved.

www.yorkhospitals.nhs.uk