

Fractured humerus (upper arm bone)

Aftercare advice for patients discharged with a fractured humerus.

1. Your plaster or brace is designed to support the fracture and put weight onto the elbow so please ensure that under the elbow is left free and unsupported at all times. Do not put pillows or cushions underneath the elbow or place your elbow on the arm of a chair. If you have been given a sling, please only use the sling provided.
2. If you have a sling, please remove it regularly for gentle exercise of the elbow and wrist as your pain allows. This will help to reduce joint stiffness and swelling.
3. Unless instructed otherwise, the cast/brace must remain in place at all times. There may be parts of the brace that can be removed or adjusted; your clinician will advise you if this is the case. If you have any questions or concerns regarding adjusting the brace, please contact the Plaster Room.
4. You should sleep in an upright position to allow your elbow to hang. This is often more comfortable in a chair with your feet on a footstool. You can also use pillows to prop yourself up in bed to achieve this position.
5. Please seek medical advice (from the numbers below) if:
 - The plaster or brace feels too loose or too tight.
 - You experience pins and needles in your fingers or hand that worsen or do not improve with gentle exercise.
 - You are unable to or have increased difficulty moving/lifting your wrist.
 - You experience any discomfort to the skin from the cast/brace.
 - The plaster becomes cracked or broken.
 - Your hand/fingers change colour or feel cold.
 - You experience excessive pain.
 - Your fingers and arm become very swollen.
6. Please remember to move your fingers and wrist to encourage any swelling to settle. If you have been given a sling, you may also adjust the sling to elevate the wrist above the elbow to ease swelling. The team will show you how to adjust the sling.
7. Regularly check the skin around the cast/brace and wash (and dry) this area as able. Pay close attention to washing and drying under the armpit and the inside elbow crease.
8. Do not be alarmed if your arm, hand, chest and neck show a large amount of bruising – this is quite normal and should improve with time and gentle exercise.

If you have any problems or concerns you may contact either:

Emergency Department (A&E): 0118 322 7022

Plaster Room: 0118 322 7040

Compassionate

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