

Managing your child's broken collarbone

Children's Emergency Department

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Information for Patients, Parents & Carers

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How is my child's broken collarbone treated?

A collarbone (clavicle) fracture is one of the bones frequently broken in children, but fortunately they almost always heal very well. Children under 13 won't need a follow-up appointment. Children older than 13 sometimes have problems with healing and so will be seen in the fracture clinic.

All children will be given a sling, and regardless of age, almost all will need no other treatment.

What can I do to help my child?

For the first few days the fracture will be painful and so regular pain relief with paracetamol and ibuprofen is very important. Some children may have difficulty with sleeping. Supporting their arm with a pillow may help with this.

Whether or not your child needs a follow-up appointment, they still have a fracture, and they may need help with things like washing and dressing. This is especially likely to be the case in the first 2 weeks. After this, encourage them to do things by themselves.

Check with your child's school or nursery to see if they have any specific rules about wearing slings.

How long will it take to heal and get back to normal activities?

Although all children are different and will heal at their own pace, some general guidance about what they may be able to do during this time is given on the next page:

**Health information and support is available at www.nhs.uk
or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice**

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- Week 1:** Your child should wear their sling and may need time at home.
- Week 2:** Encourage your child to continue to wear their sling for support and protection. There is no medical reason why they cannot attend school.
- Week 3/4:** Your child can use their injured arm for writing, drawing and playing on the computer.
- Week 5/6:** No sling.
Your child can now join in with non-contact activities (e.g. running and swimming). Avoid bikes/ scooters, trampolines and bouncy castles.
- Week 7:** Your child can return back to full normal activities. It may take a few more weeks before they feel comfortable returning to full contact sports (e.g. football, rugby).

Don't worry if your child refuses to wear the sling. The sling is there purely for pain relief and if they don't want it, they probably don't need it.

When should I worry?

Your child must be seen in the Emergency Department if they have persistent tingling or a strange sensation in the arm or hand.

A bump over the fracture is quite normal as the bone heals, and may take up to 2 years to heal. If your child is older, there may always be a small bump but this will not interfere with any of their movements.

Contact details

If you have any concerns you can contact the NHS helpline on 111 for advice.

Giving us your feedback

We would love to get some feedback on your visit today. Use your smart phone to scan this QR code for quick access to our online feedback survey form.

Alternatively, you can access the feedback form from our website:

<https://www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk/patients/thinking-of-choosing-us/patient-experience/>



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