

## Scaphoid Fracture

Hand 9

### Fracture Care Team: Shared Care Plan

Trust Switchboard for both sites: 0300 131 4500  
Fracture clinic and orthopaedic outpatient appointments:  
Eastbourne 0300 131 4788  
Conquest 0300 131 4861  
Casting Department: Eastbourne 0300 131 5564  
Casting Department: Conquest 0300 131 4860

This information leaflet explains the ongoing management of your injury.

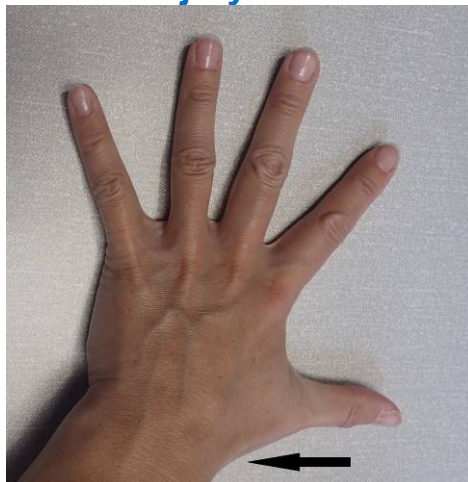
**You have broken your scaphoid bone. This is a bone at the bottom of the thumb as shown in the picture below.**

- Healing:** This normally takes approximately 6 weeks to heal. The cast is to help the bones heal you will need it for 6 weeks. If you are having problems or discomfort with the cast please get in touch.
- Pain and swelling:** Take pain killers as required.
- Using your hand:** You may use the hand as pain allows.
- Follow up:** You will be reviewed in fracture clinic. If you have not received an appointment letter please contact the Fracture Care Team on the number provided above.

### Issues with the scaphoid:

Fractures are not always apparent on the first X-rays. Sometimes the bone fails to pick up a blood supply and the fracture is at risk of not joining. Sometimes the position of the fracture makes it likely to have a poor result. In these situations, the specialist will discuss with you the risks or benefits of an operation.

### Area of injury:



If you are worried that you are unable to follow this rehabilitation plan,

**Or** if you are experiencing pain or symptoms, other than at the site of the original injury or surrounding area,

**Or** have any questions, then please phone the Fracture Care Team on the details provided above for advice.

## Please follow Management / Rehabilitation plan below -

Weeks since injury	Plan
0 – 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Your arm will be in a cast for 4- 6 weeks</li><li>✓ You will be reviewed in fracture clinic around 2 weeks post injury</li></ul>
6 – 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ You will be seen again in fracture clinic to remove the cast and be seen by the hand team</li><li>✓ The injury should have healed.</li><li>✗ Heavy tasks or lifting may be uncomfortable.</li></ul>
12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✗ If you are still experiencing significant pain and swelling then please contact the Fracture Care Team for advice.</li></ul>

### Advice for a new injury

#### Cold packs:

A cold pack (ice pack or frozen peas wrapped in a damp towel) can provide short-term pain relief.

Apply this to the sore area for up to 15 minutes, every few hours. The ice must never be in direct contact with the skin.

#### Stop smoking:

Medical evidence suggests that smoking increases the time it takes for a fracture to heal. In extreme cases it can stop healing altogether. Stopping smoking during the healing phase of your fracture will help ensure the best recovery from this injury.

For advice on smoking cessation and local support available, please refer to the following website: <https://smokefree.gov> or discuss this with your GP.

### Confirming the diagnosis

In some people the scaphoid fracture is not obvious on Xray. In this case, we often arrange an MRI scan to view the fracture site more clearly. It is important to keep the wrist still, in a splint or plaster, whilst there may be a scaphoid fracture. Excess movement may reduce the change of the fracture healing.

### Sources of information

This information leaflet has been developed by the Fracture Care Team at Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals Fracture Care Team and adapted for use at East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust. Information been updated during the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure that patients with injuries have information, support and care despite social distancing.

### Important information

This patient information is for guidance purposes only and is not provided to replace professional clinical advice from a qualified practitioner.

## Your comments

We are always interested to hear your views about our leaflets. If you have any comments, please contact the Patient Experience Team – Tel: 0300 131 4731 (direct dial) or by email at: [esh-tr.patientexperience@nhs.net](mailto:esh-tr.patientexperience@nhs.net)

## Hand hygiene

The trust is committed to maintaining a clean, safe environment. Hand hygiene is very important in controlling infection. Alcohol gel is widely available at the patient bedside for staff use and at the entrance of each clinical area for visitors to clean their hands before and after entering.

## Other formats

**If you require any of the Trust leaflets in alternative formats, such as large print or alternative languages, please contact the Equality and Human Rights Department.**

**Tel: 0300 131 4434 Email: [esh-tr.AccessibleInformation@nhs.net](mailto:esh-tr.AccessibleInformation@nhs.net)**

After reading this information are there any questions you would like to ask? Please list below and ask your nurse, practitioner or doctor.

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## Reference

Thank you to the Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust and to Kate Weatherly, Specialist Orthopaedic Physiotherapist for the first version.

**This leaflet can also be found at: [www.esht.nhs.uk/leaflet/scaphoid-fracture/](http://www.esht.nhs.uk/leaflet/scaphoid-fracture/)**

The following clinicians have been consulted and agreed this patient information:

- Mr Guy Selmon – Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon
- Mr Andrew Skyrme – Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon
- Mrs Scarlett McNally - Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon
- Miss Miranda Champion - Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon
- Helen Harper-Smith – Professional Lead Physiotherapist
- Hilary Kircher – Clinical / Operational Lead Outpatient Physiotherapist

The Clinical Specialty/Unit that have agreed this patient information leaflet:  
Department of Trauma and Orthopaedics

Next review date: April 2023  
Responsible clinician/author: Helen Harper-Smith – Professional Lead Physiotherapist  
Mrs Scarlett McNally – Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon