

## Dislocated Elbow

### Information for patients

#### Outpatient Fracture Care Team: Shared care plan

Orthopaedic Department  
Tunbridge Wells Hospital  
Tonbridge Road  
Pembury  
TN2 4QJ

Telephone: 01892-638450

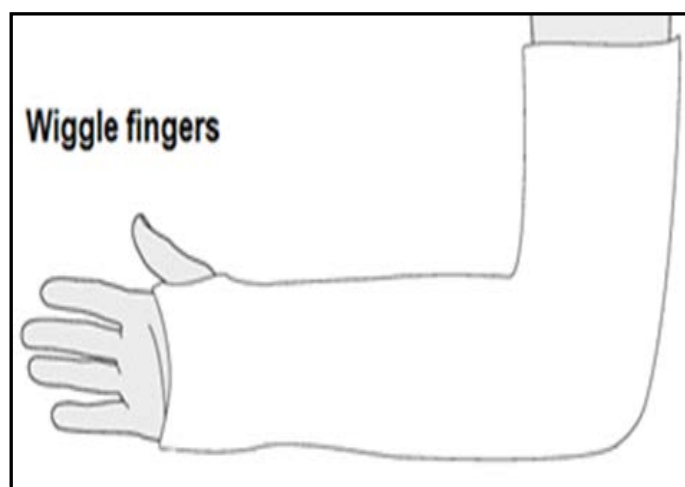
Email: [Mtw-tr.fracturecare@nhs.net](mailto:Mtw-tr.fracturecare@nhs.net)

This is a follow-up letter to your recent telephone consultation with the Fracture Care Team explaining the ongoing management of your injury. Your case has been reviewed by an Orthopaedic Consultant (Bone Specialist) and Fracture Care Extended Scope Physiotherapist.

**You have sustained a dislocation to your elbow (plus an associated fracture).** You will have been placed in a temporary “backslab” (plaster) in A&E and given a sling. It is important that you can always wiggle your fingers whilst in this plaster and that you have full sensation to your fingers. If at any time you lose sensation or movement of your fingers you should immediately return to A&E to have your plaster checked. The injury normally takes approximately six weeks to heal.

Take pain killers as prescribed. If you are worried that you are unable to follow this rehabilitation plan, or have any questions, then please phone the Fracture Care Team for advice.

**Please see the picture below to understand where this injury and the “backslab” plaster are:**



If you are experiencing pain and symptoms anywhere else, other than at the site of the original injury or surrounding area, please get in touch using the telephone or email details at the top of this letter.

You have been referred to see an upper limb (elbow) specialist seven to ten days post-injury. They will remove your temporary cast and examine your elbow. Depending on the outcome of this examination you may be fitted in another cast or brace and you may need further X-rays. The specialist will talk you through the next stage of your rehabilitation

If you have not received this appointment within one week of receipt of this letter please contact the Fracture Care Team on the telephone number given at the top of this letter,

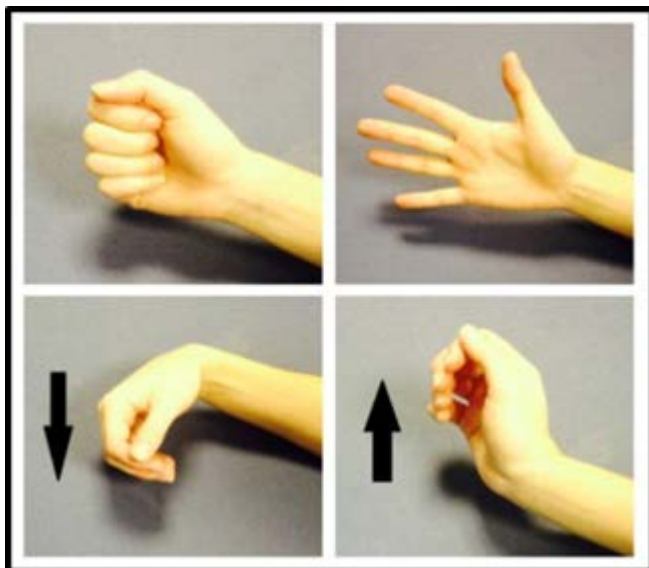
Please follow the management/rehabilitation plan shown below:

Weeks since injury	Rehabilitation plan
0-2	Keep the injured arm elevated in the sling or on pillows if more comfortable. Do the circulation exercises shown below.
2-6	The specialist will give you advice for the next phase of your rehabilitation at your follow up appointment.

### Smoking cessation

Medical evidence suggests that smoking prolongs fracture healing time. In extreme cases it can stop healing altogether. It is important that you consider this information with relation to your recent injury. Stopping smoking during the healing phase of your fracture will help ensure optimal recovery from this injury. For advice on smoking cessation and local support available, please refer to the following website: <http://smokefree.nhs.uk> or discuss this with your GP.

Initial exercises to do four to five times a day:



#### Finger and wrist flexion and extension

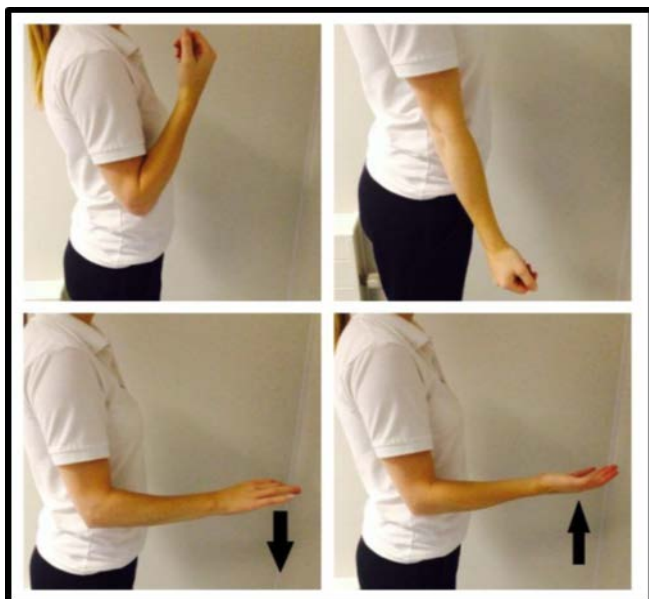
Open and close the hand of your injured arm as shown 10-15 times.

Then move the wrist up and down 10-15 times.

After a few days, hold a soft ball or ball of socks. Squeeze the ball as hard as possible without it causing pain.

Hold for five seconds and repeat ten times.

Likely exercises for you to progress onto after your consultation five to six times a day:



#### Elbow bend to straighten

Bend and straighten your injured elbow so you feel a mild to moderate stretch. You can use your other arm to assist if necessary. Do not push into pain.

#### Forearm rotations

Put your injured elbow at your side. Bend it to 90 degrees. Slowly rotate your palm up and down until you feel a mild to moderate stretch. You can use your other arm to assist if necessary. Do not push into pain.


Repeat both exercises 10-15 times provided there is no increase in pain.



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**Further information and advice can be obtained from:**

**NHS 111**  
**NHS Choices online**

 **111**  
[www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

**MTW NHS Trust is committed to making its patient information accessible in a range of languages and formats. If you need this leaflet in another language or format please ask one of your clinical care team or the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS). We will do our best to arrange this.**

Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust welcomes all forms of feedback from our service users. If the standard of service you have received from the Trust does not meet your expectations, we want to hear from you. Please speak with the ward manager or the nurse in charge in the first instance, or you can contact the **Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)** on:

**Telephone:**  01622 224960 or  01892 632953

**Email:** [mtw-tr.palsoffice@nhs.net](mailto:mtw-tr.palsoffice@nhs.net)

**or visit their office** at either Maidstone or Tunbridge Wells Hospital between 9.00am and 5.00pm, Monday to Friday.

You can be confident that your care will not be affected by highlighting any areas of concern or making a complaint. The Trust will retain a record of your contact, which is held separately to any medical records. If you are acting on behalf of a patient, we may need to obtain the patient's consent in order to protect patient confidentiality. More information on PALS or making a complaint can be found on the Trust's website: [www.mtw.nhs.uk](http://www.mtw.nhs.uk) or pick up a leaflet from main reception.

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