

Suspected Scaphoid Fracture

Information for patients



Following the assessment of your wrist in the Emergency Department, a fracture to one of the carpal bones in your wrist cannot be fully excluded on x-ray. A missed scaphoid fracture can lead to the early onset of arthritis therefore those aged between 16 years and 70 years require a CT scan to assist with diagnosis. Those under 16 years of age who are skeletally immature are unlikely to sustain this type of fracture and to avoid unnecessary radiation exposure are reviewed in a Fracture Clinic. Patients aged 70 years and older are more likely to sustain fractures to the radius and/or ulna bones of the wrist. In addition, there may be some pre-existing degenerative changes (such as osteoarthritis) and although painful, surgical intervention would not be beneficial.

You may have been immobilised in a wrist splint (futura splint). It is recommended that you keep this in place until you have received confirmation of your diagnosis and the management plan for your injury.

CT scan:

A CT may have been arranged during your attendance to the Emergency Department however if this has not been done the Virtual Fracture Clinic will contact you with further information. It is advised the CT is completed within 1 week of your injury.

Tunbridge Wells Hospital

Patients who have had a CT requested by the assessing Clinician in the Emergency Department can attend for a CT scan in the main Radiology Department on Level 0 (Monday-Friday between 9am-4pm) and give your details and explain you have been referred for a CT scan. Once you have had your CT scan, you may go home. The Virtual Fracture Clinic Team will contact you once the CT scan has been reported and reviewed by an Orthopaedic Consultant. This can take several days.

Maidstone Hospital (Hermitage Court)

Please do not attend for your CT scan until you have been given an appointment. The Radiology department will contact you directly to give you a specific date and time for an appointment to attend. To expedite your appointment, you can contact the CT booking Office at Hermitage Court on 01622 225688. Once you have had your CT scan, you may go home. The Virtual Fracture Clinic Team will contact you once the CT scan has been reported and reviewed by an Orthopaedic Consultant.

Pain, Stiffness and swelling:

Pain, stiffness, swelling and bruising are very common after any injury and reflect your body's normal healing processes; which in turn tend to settle down as the weeks progress. However, too much swelling causes problems such as pain and loss of finger movement. Here are some suggestions to help you manage your symptoms:

- Elevate your hand above the level of your chest regularly and avoid hanging your arm by your side for prolonged periods. You may have been provided with a sling to assist you with this. Alternatively, you may elevate your arm on a stack of pillows.
- Regularly move your shoulder, elbow and fingers to prevent stiffness and aid circulation
- It is important during your recovery that you take regular pain relief. Do not wait until your pain is severe before you start taking pain relief as it will not be as effective. If you need further advice please speak to your GP or pharmacist.

Initial Injury Advice:

Pain Management

It is important during your recovery that you take regular pain relief to promote restoration of normal movement and sleep. Do not wait until your pain is severe before you start taking pain relief as it will not be as effective. If you need further advice please speak to your GP or pharmacist.

Nutrition

The healing process requires lots of energy and minerals from our diet and your body needs more than the normal daily calories to both function and heal. It is important to keep up a healthy, balanced diet with protein, fresh fruit and vegetables. The vitamins and nutrients provided will help towards your recovery.

Smoking & Alcohol

Healing tissue times are very well established to be impaired by nicotine found in tobacco and vapes. Finding a way to cut down your intake even marginally, even if for the first few weeks after injury will make for a quicker recovery.

For advice on smoking cessation and local support available, please refer to the following website One You Kent Smokefree www.oneyoukent.org.uk Tel: 0300 123 1220 or discuss this with your GP.

Similarly, alcohol consumption above the recommended national guidance of 14 units of alcohol per week can impair healing directly and influence the ability of every major organ in the body to function normally, each one playing a vital role in healing.

Further information and advice can be obtained from:

List any appropriate support groups / telephone / web / email addresses.

NHS 111

 111

NHS Choices online

www.nhs.uk

The Trust operates a smoke free policy. This means that smoking is not permitted anywhere on hospital grounds. For Free NHS support to stop smoking please contact:

 **0300 123 1220**

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

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 or pick up a leaflet from main reception.

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