

Fracture of the clavicle (collar bone)

ORTHOPAEDIC FACT SHEET

Your child has a fractured clavicle (collar bone). The fracture generally occurs in the middle of the bone (**Figure 1**). These fractures heal well with rest and time.

An arm sling should be worn for comfort for two to three weeks (**Figure 2**). Simple pain medication is often needed, and should be given regularly until comfortable. Never exceed the recommended dose. Encourage your child to move the elbow, hand and fingers. Gentle shoulder movement can begin when the sling is removed.

Most clavicle fractures are undisplaced. This means that the bone remains correctly aligned. Children under eleven years with undisplaced clavicle bone fractures do not require follow-up with a doctor or x-ray. Children over eleven years, and those who have a displaced fracture, will be reviewed in the fracture clinic or with the GP in one week. You will be advised if your child requires additional appointments.

Healing takes three to four weeks depending on the age of your child. Your child may return to sports such as swimming as soon as comfortable, but contact sports should be avoided for 6 weeks after the sling comes off.

A lump at the fracture site is quite normal and may take about a year to disappear. In older children a small bump may remain.

Return to your GP or fracture clinic if:

- there is pain at the site of the fracture after six weeks
- there is persistent tingling or altered sensation in the arm or hand.

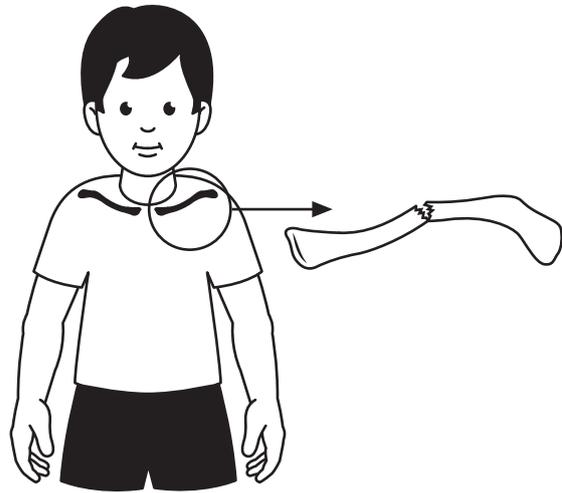


Figure 1. The fracture generally occurs in the middle of the bone



Figure 2. An arm sling should be used for comfort for two to three weeks