Information for patients and parents/carers – Princess Royal University Hospital

This leaflet explains what to do if you/your child has been diagnosed with a minor injury of the collar bone. It explains the symptoms, what you can do and what you can expect.

Minor fractures of the clavicle (collar bone)

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PALS
The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) is a service that offers support, information and assistance to patients, relatives and visitors. They can also provide help and advice if you have a concern or complaint that staff have not been able to resolve for you. They can also pass on praise or thanks to our teams. The PALS office is in the main hospital foyer at PRUH and they would be happy to advise you.

PALS at Princess Royal University Hospital,
Farnborough Common, Orpington, Kent BR6 8ND
Tel: 01689 863252
Email: kch-tr.palspruh@nhs.net

If you would like the information in this leaflet in a different language or format, please contact our Communications and Interpreting telephone line on 020 3299 4826 or email kch-tr.accessibility@nhs.net.

Sharing your information
We have teamed up with Guy’s and St Thomas’ Hospitals in a partnership known as King’s Health Partners Academic Health Sciences Centre. We are working together to give our patients the best possible care, so you might find we invite you for appointments at Guy’s or St Thomas’.

To make sure everyone you meet always has the most up-to-date information about your health, we may share information about you between the hospitals.

Care provided by students
We provide clinical training where our students get practical experience by treating patients. Please tell your doctor or nurse if you do not want students to be involved in your care. Your treatment will not be affected by your decision.

How to find us
For information on directions, public transport and parking visit www.kch.nhs.uk and look at ‘Getting to King’s’.

www.kch.nhs.uk
Introduction
Your child has been seen and assessed by one
the doctors or nurse practitioners who believes
it is safe for you to take your child home. This
leaflet has been written by the doctors and nurses
working in the children’s emergency department
to act as a guide and is to remind you of some
of the things you need to know in order to look
after your child in the future. We hope this will be
helpful to you. Please read it carefully.

Clavicle fractures
Your child has been diagnosed with a minor
clavicle fracture. Hearing us say your child has a
‘fracture’ sounds serious. The good news is, your
child has a minor injury - the bones are stable and
held in the right place, no procedures are needed
and your child will make a full recovery.

The most common part to break is in the middle
of the collar bone. The bone is in a good position
and, with rest and time, the bone will heal very
well by itself. There is no need for an operation
or any other procedure. There is also no need for
your child to be seen again in clinic or to have any
more x-rays.

What to expect
• Pain - Your child will have some pain. Use
simple pain medicine like paracetamol or
ibuprofen.
• The Sling - An arm sling should be worn for
comfort to two to three weeks or until moving
the arm is comfortable. The arm can come
out of the sling for bathing and dressing. They
may be more comfortable sitting up to sleep.
Do NOT let your child wear the sling while
sleeping.
• A Lump - As the bone heals, you may see
or feel a lump on the bone. This is normal
and could take about a year to shrink away.
Occasionally in older children the lump does
not go away completely.
• Stiffness - After the pain improves, the
shoulder may still be stiff. The arm should be
gently moved, little by little each day, until the
arm can move normally in all directions.

Virtual Fracture Clinic
Your child’s injury will heal up all on its own. To
ensure safety, we ask our team in the ‘Virtual
Fracture Clinic’ to review all cases nonetheless.
Details of your child’s injury and the x-ray images
will be reviewed by our orthopaedic (bone
specialist) and physiotherapy teams. Normally they
will not need to call you. You can simply continue
to follow the Emergency Department (ED)
instructions and advice. If your child’s injury does
not improve as outlined by the ED instructions,
please contact the virtual fracture clinic on the
details below.

Occasionally, the team may need to contact you
by phone to discuss your child’s injury further.

The doctors in ED will let you know if you should
expect a follow up phone call. This call will be a
withheld number and be between 9am – 4pm,
Monday – Friday.

PLEASE ENSURE WE HAVE YOUR CORRECT
CONTACT DETAILS BEFORE YOU GO HOME.

If you have been told to expect a call and have
not been contacted within three working days
of your child’s visit, please phone 01689 865136
between 9am – 4pm, Monday - Friday.
Email: kch-tr.pruhfracturecareteam@nhs.net

Sport and School
Writing at school with the injured arm isn’t
harmful but may well be too painful in the first
few days. Normally a child should be able to
return to school within a week. After your child
is moving the arm well and no longer needs the
sling, they can return to gentle activity. Contact
sports and games where there is a risk of falling
while running, should be avoided for a further
month at least.

Problems
If your child has sudden new pain, swelling or
tingling down the arm, that would be unusual.
Please return to the Emergency Department
anytime to be reviewed.

If you have any other problems, for example,
the pain just does not settle, please attend
the Emergency Department, preferably in the
morning.

To ensure your child’s injury is being treated
correctly, their X-rays are routinely reviewed by