

## Pain

Basic over-the-counter painkillers can help, but you should always check with your GP or Pharmacist for advice. If needed, it can be helpful to take some pain relief prior to completing exercises. The use of heat can help relieve pain and stiffness; therefore you may find it helpful to complete your exercises in warm water.

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## Patient advice and liaison service (PALS)

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# Wrist Fracture

What to expect after surgery or removal of your cast

## A patient's guide



## Stiffness and Weakness

It is normal for your wrist to feel stiff, painful and weak once your cast is removed. Your wrist may also feel vulnerable, but it is important that you try to use it as normally as possible for light activities. Avoid heavy lifting for 10-12 weeks after your injury unless instructed otherwise by your doctor or therapist.

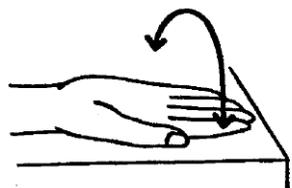
It is important that you start to exercise your arm as soon as your cast is removed, including your shoulder and elbow.

We recommend you complete the following exercises 4 times a day. Start with 5 repetitions and increase to 10 repetitions over the next few days as the pain allows. Hold each position 5 seconds



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- Rest the palm of your hand and forearm on a table, fingers are straight.
- Bend your wrist towards the little finger and then towards the thumb



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- Rest the palm of your hand and forearm on a table. Slowly turn your palm up and then down keeping your elbow still.



- Make a tight fist. Use a bath sponge or your other hand to help if necessary. Then fully straighten the fingers.



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- Rest forearm on a table with your hand over the edge. Bend hand towards the floor and then up towards the ceiling, keep fingers relaxed.



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- Touch each fingertip to your thumb making an "O" shape. Then slide your thumb down your little finger as far as you can.



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- Place your palms together.
- Gradually move your elbows apart while keeping your palms together until you feel a comfortable stretch.
- Hold for 5 -10 seconds, then relax.

## Swelling

It is normal for your wrist and hand to be swollen. Swelling is part of the natural healing process and can take many months to settle down. The following can help to reduce it:

1. Elevation: When resting, place your hand on a cushion or at night raise up your hand on a pillow.
2. Massage: Gently massage from the fingers towards the wrist and elbow
3. Contrast Bathing: Prepare two containers of tap water, one cold and one warm (not extreme temperatures). Alternate hand between the containers up to 6 times, holding it in the water for up to a minute. Do not do this if you have an active wound.