

Our outpatient clinics run between 9am to 5pm Monday-Friday. If you have any concerns or problems during these times please contact:

Clinic 1B  
Whittington Hospital  
Magdala Avenue, London N19 5NF

The Fracture clinic: 020 7288 3799 or 5659  
The plaster room: 020 7288 5668

The emergency department at any other time  
Phone: 020 7288 3304

#### [Patient advice and liaison service \(PALS\)](#)

If you have a compliment, complaint or concern please contact our PALS team on 020 7288 5551 or [whh-tr.whitthealthPALS@nhs.net](mailto:whh-tr.whitthealthPALS@nhs.net)

If you need a large print, audio or translated copy of this leaflet please contact us on 020 7288 3182. We will try our best to meet your needs.

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## Radial Head Fracture

### A patient's guide



You have a small break in the radial head - one of the bones in your elbow.

These fractures almost always heal well with time. No specific treatment is needed and therefore routine follow up is often not required.

A sling or a poly sling will hold your elbow in a comfortable position for a few days.

You should wean yourself off from the sling, as your pain settles and aim to remove the sling completely as soon as you feel able.

Expect some pain and swelling post injury. This can be eased by applying ice for approximately 15 minutes 3-4 times a day. Wrap the ice in a towel to protect your skin.

Basic pain killers will help especially in the first few days post injury; speak to your GP or pharmacist if you need further advice.

You may initially require regular pain killers as it is important to keep gently moving the elbow and gradually resume daily activities within the limits of discomfort. This will prevent stiffness and ensure the quickest return to normal function.

Forced movement is unnecessary, and is likely to cause pain and delay your recovery.

Please refer to our exercise video on the Whittington website:  
<https://www.whittington.nhs.uk/VFC>

Symptoms are usually minor, but may take up to 3-6 weeks to settle.

There may be slightly reduced movement at the elbow, especially on straightening it, but this is unlikely to affect your function.

Do not return to contact sport until you are pain free and for at least 6 weeks after the injury. Please refer to the DVLA website regarding your fitness to drive if required.

A range of patient information leaflets and videos providing guidance and advice are available here:



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