





## Distal Radius Fracture

### WHILE YOUR WRIST IS IN A CAST

When you are in a cast it is important to keep your fingers, elbow and shoulder moving but not overuse your arm which could slow down your bone healing. Controlling swelling and pain is also very important and your hand therapist will give you appropriate exercises and advice about how to manage everyday life with a cast on your wrist.

### WHEN YOUR CAST COMES OFF

You can expect your wrist to be stiff, weak and sore when your cast comes off. Your hand therapist may give you a removable splint to make things a bit easier while you recover your movement and strength.

#### Do

- Wear your splint
- Keep your hand elevated if there is swelling in your wrist or hand, this will help it heal.
- Follow your hand therapists' instructions about exercises and using your hand.
- Use heat and massage before exercise to make it more comfortable.

#### Do Not

- Remove your splint without guidance from your hand therapist.

### WHAT SHOULD I LOOK OUT FOR?

If you have any of these symptoms it is important to tell your hand therapist straight away

- Pins and needles.
- Numbness or weird sensations.
- Swelling that doesn't go down.
- Pain that does not settle when you take medicines such as paracetamol (Panadol) or ibuprofen (Nurofen).
- Inability to move your wrist, fingers or thumb.

### WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF I DO NOT HAVE TREATMENT?

When you fracture your distal radius it is common to also injure ligaments and the cartilage that lines the inside of your joint. Other complications can include damage to the nerves or rupture of a tendon. Your hand therapist is expert at recognising and treating these conditions, and if needed, will refer you to an appropriate medical specialist. Without hand therapy rehabilitation your recovery may take longer and be more painful. Some complications may have a serious effect on your ability to work and enjoy life.

### CONTACT DETAILS AND REFERENCES

Your hand therapist is

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Merivale Hand Clinic (03) 3559775

<http://www.midwestorthopediccenter.com/distal-radius-fracture-handout>

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