Patient Information Leaflet
- METACARPAL (HAND) FRACTURES

Fracture Clinic.
Telephone 01384 456111 ext 2220.
Welcome to the Dudley Group of Hospitals Fracture Clinic. This leaflet will provide you with information regarding what to expect following a Metacarpal (Hand) Fracture. It will describe some of the possible signs and symptoms and treatment you will be given.

Introduction

There are 5 Metacarpal bones in each hand, these connect the wrist to the fingers and thumb.

Common causes are falls, sports injury, road accidents and fighting. Any one of the Metacarpal bones can be broken and sometimes more than one is broken.

Signs & symptoms

You may experience the following:-
- Pain,
- Swelling and / or stiffness mostly over the injured area,
- Bruising.

What do I need to do?

You will need to immediately remove any rings, watches or Bracelets.

What treatment will I receive?

You will be seen by a Doctor or Nurse, who may arrange for an X-ray to be done and decide upon the treatment you need.

In some circumstances:-
- You may need to have the bone straightened (if this is required the Doctor will explain this procedure to you) and have a plaster cast applied.
- A plaster cast may not be required (The Doctor will explain why).
- Some patients may need an operation to fix the fracture/break. (The Doctor will explain this to you)

What should I do to help my wrist?

- If your wrist is swollen or achy, then soaking it in a bowl of warm water will help.
- Massage regularly with oils or hand cream directed over the wrist and towards the elbow.
- If the hand and arm are swollen then elevate on pillows and keep the fingers moving.
- Aim to use your wrist as normally as possible,
- To prevent the shoulder and elbow from stiffening, keep them moving.
- Follow the recommended exercises below to you regain any loss of movement.

Remember these exercises are in order of easy to advanced so work through at your own tolerance. Aim to complete the whole sheet at the end of one month.
Exercises

You will be advised to move your hand as much as possible, to avoid any stiffness and restore function as quickly as possible.

The purpose of these exercises is to provide you with the correct advice on how to return your wrist to normal once the cast has been removed. The exercises should be performed little and often and progressed at your own tolerance.

- Fully flex your wrist.
- Try to flex your wrist even more.
- Hold for 30 seconds.

- Fully extend your wrist.
- Try to extend your wrist even more.
- Hold for 30 seconds.

- Rest your forearm on a table, palm turned down.
- Alternately turn palm up and down keeping elbow straight.

- Hold fingers and wrist straight.
- Bend wrist first towards the little finger and then towards the thumb.

Continued/…
Support your elbow on a table with your wrist straight and your fingers pointing towards the ceiling.

Make a fist (thumb over fingers). Straighten your fingers and bring them apart.

Put the back of your hand on a table.

Bring your thumb to the base of your little finger. Bring your thumb back.

Place the palm of your hand on a table.

Bring your thumb away from the index finger and then back again.

If you have any problems during this treatment episode please speak to the Doctor or Nurse in clinic.

If you have any concerns / problems please speak to a member of staff or contact the Fracture Clinic at Russell’s Hall Hospital on 01384 456111 extension 2220 the department is open Monday to Friday between the hours of 8.30am to 5pm.

Originator: Senior Sister Jenny Davies/ Mr. A. Marsh. Orthopaedic Consultant.
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- call 0800 0730510

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the Patient Information Co-ordinator on 0800 0730510

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