

Patient Information Sheet – 76

Simple Hand Fracture

What do I need to know?

What is my diagnosis?

You have fractured (broken) a small bone in your hand. The bone most commonly injured is called the **triquetral bone**.

The type of injury you have suffered is painful, but almost all of these injuries heal fully **without the need for any intervention or surgery**. Sometimes you may need a wrist splint to wear for a few days to help reduce pain.



What happens next?

- Your X-rays and notes will be checked by an Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon

If nothing further is needed, we will not contact you

- If any other treatment or assessment is needed we will contact you by telephone or post
- Please make sure the Emergency Department/Minor Injury Unit reception staff have your mobile and home phone numbers

What can I expect during my recovery?

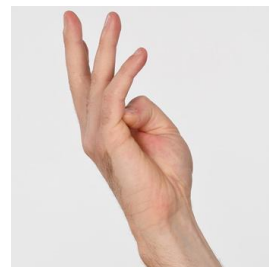
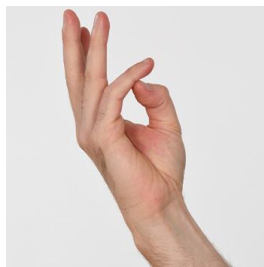
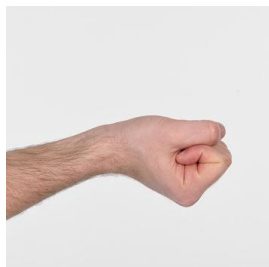
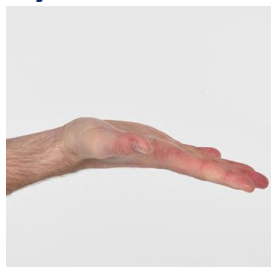
- During **weeks 1 and 2**, the hand will be painful, but this will ease over time
- Simple pain killers such as paracetamol and ibuprofen can be helpful
- It is normal to have bruising and swelling in the hand
- The splint can be taken off once the pain has improved – usually after **one week**
- It is safe to move your fingers and hand – this will not stop healing
- Perform the exercises on the next page as the pain improves
- You can use your hand for light day-to-day activities and you may return to work and driving once the pain has improved, and you feel it is safe to do so
- Manual work and sports are usually started around **4-6 weeks** after injury but can be longer
- There is **no specific time you can drive again**. It is **illegal** to drive when wearing a sling, splint, cast, or moonboot. As you recover, it is your legal responsibility to be certain before you return to driving that you are able to control your vehicle normally and safely.

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Key exercises



Gently stretch out the fingers, then try and make a fist. This may be uncomfortable, but you do not need to push movement to the point to pain. Try and do this for **5 minutes, 5 times a day**. When the hand is warmed up, touch the tip of each finger with your thumb. Once you can do this, start to bring the tip of your thumb to the bottom of each finger.

What if I have a problem?

Very occasionally some patients have difficulties with ongoing pain or stiffness. If you have any issues beyond **three months** after injury please contact us on the numbers below.

Get in touch

Please get in touch via our trauma email if you have queries about your injury:

traumaenquiriesRIE@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk

**If you do not receive a reply after 3 working days call our Monday-Friday helpline (8am-4pm):
0131 242 3410**

Urgent issues

Please call the department where you were initially seen about your injury:

- **RIE Minor Injuries Unit:** 0131 242 3942 (8am- midnight, if after midnight contact RIE Emergency Department 0131 242 1300)
- **WGH Minor Injuries Clinic:** 0131 536 3468 (9am-8:30pm)
- **SJH Emergency Department:** 01506 523 011 (24 hours)