

Care of a child in a wrist splint for clinical scaphoid fracture

Leaflet information

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Information for healthcare professionals within SJH ED:

Please print double-sided A4

Information for parents:

This leaflet will be given to children and their parents and is to be used in conjunction with the advice provided by your healthcare professional.

Information for parents and guardians

St John's Hospital, Livingston

Your child has had a wrist splint applied for a clinical scaphoid injury. This is when we suspect a minor scaphoid bone fracture, but the X-Ray is normal. The splint will help the injury to heal and protect the area whilst also relieving pain.

Why a splint?

Scaphoid fractures are often very difficult to see on the initial x-rays. They can't always be confirmed until further x-rays are taken two weeks later. The splint offers protection but is easily removed and re-applied if required. Most children in fact have a bad sprain/bruise rather than a true fracture and two weeks later they are no longer sore. If this is the case, no further review or X-Ray are required.

During the first 48 hours

The arm should be kept in the splint for the first 48hrs to reduce the risk of swelling. Paracetamol and/or ibuprofen can be taken as advised on the label. Your child should be encouraged to exercise the fingers and hand by gently stretching out the fingers then making a fist a few repetitions at a time.

After the first 48 hours

The splint can be removed three times a day for 10 minutes to allow the skin to breathe and to wash and apply cream to relieve itch. It is recommended to keep the splint on all the time at school, as it alerts people to the fact that you have had an injury. It protects the wrist from any knocks in the playground.

The above are guidelines. If the wrist is painful out of the splint, then put it back on. It is likely that over the two weeks you will need to use it less and less.

All sports should be avoided for this two-week period.

Follow up

We would expect your child's wrist to be better after 2 weeks. It may be a bit stiff after the splint is taken off, but this should settle down after a few days.

If your child's wrist remains sore, please phone 0131 242 3410 between (8am-4pm Monday-Friday) to discuss with a Trauma Practitioner.