

Discharge advice following a 5th metacarpal fracture

Information for patients from the Emergency Department

What is my injury?

You have fractured a bone (5th metacarpal) on the outer part of your hand. The fracture is in a part of the bone which normally heals well and without problems.

How will my injury be treated?

The break in your bone is in an overall good position; but will need time to heal. The finger strapping provides support for your fracture while it heals.

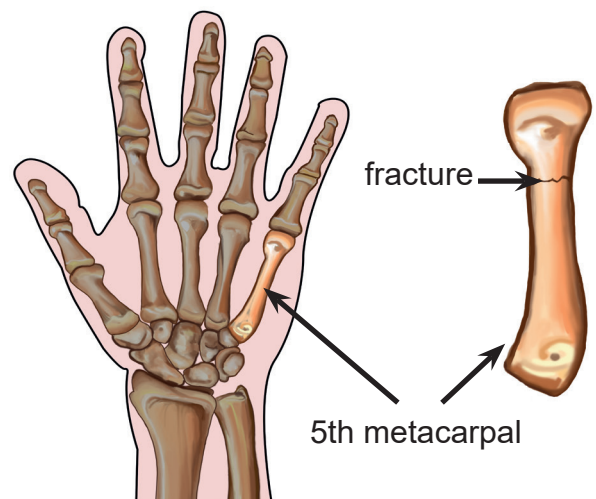
The “neighbour” strapping should be done to allow a gap over the joints, so your fingers can still bend. Sometimes a removable splint is provided to give extra comfort.

How long will it take to heal?

The pain, tenderness, and swelling you are experiencing in your hand will settle within the first couple of weeks. The strapping can be removed after a couple of weeks, as pain allows.

This fracture usually takes six weeks to heal and you will need to avoid heavy lifting for up to eight weeks so it can heal properly.

As your bone heals, a lump may form at the break site and your knuckle may not be as prominent as before your break.



What can I do to help my injury?

Use your hand as normally as possible, as moving your hand is important to stop it from becoming stiff. Hand grip is generally very good after this type of injury.

When can I return to my normal activities?

You can resume your normal activities when you are able to make a full fist with your hand and fully straighten your fingers without any pain.

What if my pain gets worse?

If your pain gets worse or lasts more than four weeks, please contact the Virtual Fracture Clinic for advice - see the contact details below.

Virtual Fracture Clinic	Emergencies only (Monday to Friday)	General enquiries (Monday to Friday)	Contact number	Email
William Harvey Hospital, Ashford	9am to 12.30pm	12.30pm to 5pm	07929 87 83 50	ekh-tr.VFCWHH@nhs.net
Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother (QEQM) Hospital, Margate	9am to 12.30pm	12.30pm to 5pm	07929 87 82 83	ekh-tr.VFCQEQM@nhs.net

This leaflet has been produced with and for patients

If you would like this information in **another language, audio, Braille, Easy Read, or large print** please ask a member of staff. You can ask someone to contact us on your behalf.

Any complaints, comments, concerns, or compliments please speak to your doctor or nurse, or contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 01227 78 31 45, or email ekh-tr.pals@nhs.net

Patients should not bring in large sums of money or valuables into hospital. Please note that East Kent Hospitals accepts no responsibility for the loss or damage to personal property, unless the property had been handed in to Trust staff for safe-keeping.

Further patient leaflets are available via the East Kent Hospitals web site www.ekhufft.nhs.uk/patientinformation