

# Scaphoid Injury

## Patient information

**You have been given this information leaflet because you have been diagnosed with a possible fracture of the scaphoid bone.**

The scaphoid bone is one of the small bones at the base of the hand and sits below the thumb. It can be fractured by a fall onto an outstretched hand or if the wrist is forcibly bent back.

The doctor / practitioner that saw you today felt that you might have a fracture based on their examination of your hand. However, your x-ray showed no evidence of this.

We know that initial x-rays of a patient with a scaphoid fracture can be normal, so you have been placed in a wrist splint just in case there is a fracture.

You have been given an appointment for one of our review clinics at either The James Cook University Hospital or at Redcar Minor Injuries Unit in approximately 3 weeks time. At that appointment you will be seen by one of our consultants who will listen to you and examine you. If we are still concerned then you may have a repeat x-ray of the scaphoid bone.

Usually if there is a fracture present then this (or some evidence of a healing fracture) will be visible on that repeat x-ray. However, if the x-ray is normal the doctor who sees you will discuss the possible diagnoses and the management options available.

## Your follow up

We take this type of injury extremely seriously to ensure we do not miss a fracture. Some scaphoid fractures can take a long time to heal or need surgery. Our aim is to avoid long term complications such as pain or impaired function of the hand / wrist.

- If your pain settles before your follow up appointment then you can cancel your appointment by contacting the relevant department by telephone. When your wrist is pain free the likelihood of you having any ongoing problem is extremely small.
- If your pain is still ongoing at the time of your appointment it is important that you attend the follow up appointment that you have been given. If you cannot make this appointment for some reason please contact the relevant department by telephone to cancel and we can give you a more convenient appointment time.
- If you do not attend your follow up appointment we will discharge you to the care of your GP and will not routinely make you another appointment. It is your responsibility to contact us and re-schedule if you cannot attend your appointment for any reason.

Emergency Department  
and Minor Injury Unit



## Treating Pain

If needed, painkiller options include the following:

**Paracetamol** is usually recommended for painful sprains or strains.

**Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs)** relieve pain and may also limit inflammation and swelling. You can buy some types (eg, ibuprofen) at pharmacies, without a prescription either topically as a cream, or as tablets. You should check the medication advice leaflet to ensure you are safe to take these i.e some patients with asthma or stomach ulcers may not be able to.

If this does not help, you may need an additional stronger painkiller – such as codeine – you should discuss this with your pharmacist or GP.

## Further Information

For further advice and information about your condition:

Please choose from the following:

- 'NHS Patient Choices' website: [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)
- 'Making Lives Better' patient website: [www.patient.info](http://www.patient.info)
- Telephone NHS 111
- Contact your General Practitioner

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### Contact details:

- The James Cook University Hospital: 01642 850850  
Marton Road, Middlesbrough, TS4 3BW
  - The Friarage: 01609 779911  
Northallerton, North Yorkshire, DL6 1JG
- Redcar Primary Care Hospital: 01642 511000  
West Dyke Road, Redcar, TS10 4NW

Author: Emergency Department and Minor Injury Unit

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**The James Cook University Hospital, Marton Road, Middlesbrough, TS4 3BW.  
Switchboard: 01642 850850**

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