

## Supracondylar humerus fracture without displacement

Your child has sustained a fracture to the arm, just above the elbow. A backslab (half cast) and a sling are required to allow the bone to heal properly.



It is often easiest to place the backslab and the sling under loose clothing instead of through a shirt sleeve.

### **The first 24-48 hours after injury**

Your child's arm, hand and fingers may swell in the first 24 -48 hours after injury. To decrease the swelling, your child should rest the arm up on a pillow when sitting or lying down.



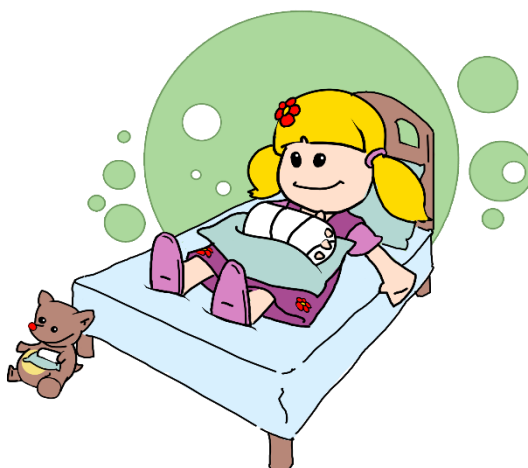
You should encourage your child to bend and straighten the fingers every hour during waking hours. You should check the temperature, colour and movement of the fingers about every 4 hours during waking hours.

Your child will have pain in the elbow initially. Medication such as Ibuprofen and/or Paracetamol as needed (as long as not allergic) following the directions on the package will help decrease the pain

### **Signs of a problem**

- Severe pain when moving the fingers.
- Fingers that are blue or white.
- Fingers that are cold (you can compare them to the fingers on the other hand).
- Fingers that cannot curl up or straighten out.
- Numbness or pins and needles in the fingers.

If your child has any of these signs, rest your child's arm on a pillow while lying down for 30 minutes.



If the problem does not get better, call your GP, or go to the Emergency Department.

### Follow-up appointment

You will be notified by the Trauma Assessment Clinic Physiotherapist with regard to review in the Fracture Clinic with the Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon, usually about 7-10 days after the injury. The Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon will show you how to take off the cast at home, 3 weeks after the date of the injury. No further follow-up is usually required.

### After 3 weeks

Remove the backslab 3 weeks after your child's fracture. Removing the backslab is not difficult. When taking off the backslab, carefully cut up front soft part of the half cast with scissors.

After removing the backslab, your child's arm may be dry and itchy and look dirty. Use warm water and soap to gently wash the arm and cream to moisturise the skin.

When the backslab is off, your child can begin moving the elbow. At first, the elbow and the wrist may be stiff. The movement will get better with time but this may take up to 6 months. Physiotherapy is not recommended.

To decrease the risk of re-breaking the arm, your child should not participate in high-risk activities such as playing on monkey-bars, trampolines or contact sports for 6 weeks after the injury.

### Key Points

- Your child needs a backslab (half cast) to help heal the broken arm.
- You will take off the backslab at home after 3 weeks.
- Your child will need to avoid high-risk activities for a total of 6 weeks after the injury.
- Your child's elbow may need 6 months to fully recover strength and movement.