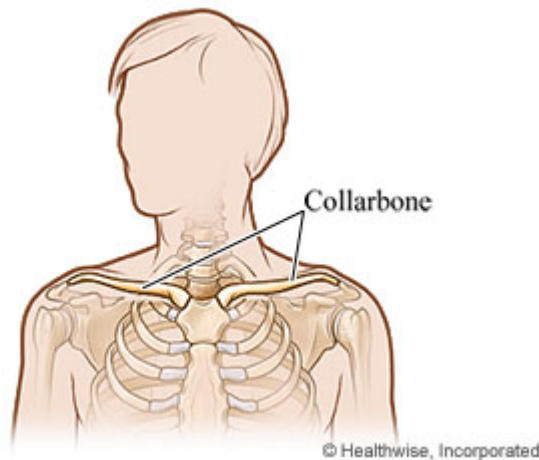


Broken Collarbone: Care Instructions



Your Care Instructions

You have broken or cracked your collarbone, or clavicle. The collarbone is the long, slightly curved bone that connects the shoulder to the chest. It supports the shoulder.

A broken collarbone may take 6 weeks or longer to heal. You will need to wear an arm sling to keep the broken bone from moving while it heals. At first, it may hurt to move your arm. This will get better with time.

You heal best when you take good care of yourself. Eat a variety of healthy foods, and don't smoke.

Follow-up care is a key part of your treatment and safety. Be sure to make and go to all appointments, and call your doctor if you are having problems. It's also a good idea to know your test results and keep a list of the medicines you take.

How can you care for yourself at home?

- Wear the sling day and night for as long as your doctor tells you to. You may take off the sling when you bathe. When the sling is off, avoid arm positions or motions that cause or increase pain.
- Put ice or a cold pack on your collarbone for 10 to 20 minutes at a time. Try to do this every 1 to 2 hours for the next 3 days (when you are awake) or until the swelling goes down. Put a thin cloth between the ice and your skin.
- Be safe with medicines. Take pain medicines exactly as directed.
 - If the doctor gave you a prescription medicine for pain, take it as prescribed.
 - If you are not taking a prescription pain medicine, ask your doctor if you can take an over-the-counter medicine.
 - Do not take two or more pain medicines at the same time unless the doctor told you to. Many pain medicines have acetaminophen, which is Tylenol. Too much acetaminophen (Tylenol) can be harmful.
- Try sleeping with pillows propped under your arm for comfort.

- After a few days, put your fingers, wrist, and elbow through their full range of motion several times a day. This will keep them from getting stiff. You may get instructions on rehabilitation exercises you can do when your shoulder starts to heal.
- You may use warm packs after the first 3 days for 15 to 20 minutes at a time to ease pain.
- You may notice a bump where the collarbone is broken. Over time, the bump will get smaller. A small bump may remain, but it should not affect your arm's strength or movement.

When should you call for help?



Call your doctor now or seek immediate medical care if:

- Your fingers become numb, tingly, cool, or pale.
- You cannot move your arm.

Watch closely for changes in your health, and be sure to contact your doctor if:

- You have new or increased pain.
- You have new or increased swelling.
- You do not get better as expected.

Where can you learn more?

Go to <https://www.healthwise.net/patiented>

Enter **P186** in the search box to learn more about "**Broken Collarbone: Care Instructions**".

©2006-2021 Healthwise, Incorporated.

This care instruction is for use with your licensed healthcare professional. If you have questions about a medical condition or this instruction, always ask your healthcare professional. Healthwise, Incorporated disclaims any warranty or liability for your use of this information.