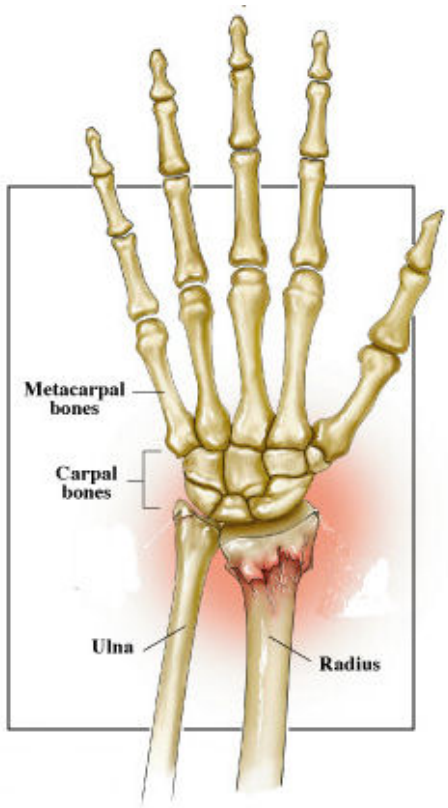
Wrist Fracture

Your caregiver has diagnosed you as having a fracture of the wrist. A *fracture* is a break in the bone or bones. A cast or splint is used to protect and keep your injured bone(s) from moving. The cast or splint will usually be on for about 5 to 6 weeks. One of the bones of the wrist (the *navicular* bone) often does not show up as a fracture on x-ray until later or in the healing phase. With this bone your caregiver will often cast as though it is fractured even if not seen on the x-ray.



© SEIF & ASSOCIATES, INC., 2005

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- To lessen the swelling, keep the injured part elevated while sitting or lying down. Keeping the injury above the level of your heart (the center of the chest) will decrease swelling and pain.
- Apply ice to the injury for 15 to 20 minutes four times per day while awake for 2 days. Put the ice in a plastic bag and place a thin towel between the bag of ice and your cast.
- If you have a plaster or fiberglass ***cast***:
  - Do not try to scratch the skin under the cast using sharp or pointed objects.
  - Check the skin around the cast every day. You may put lotion on any red or sore areas.
  - Keep your cast dry and clean.
- If you have a plaster ***splint***:
  - Wear the splint as directed.
  - You may loosen the elastic around the splint if your fingers become numb, tingle, or turn cold or blue.
- If you have been put in a removable splint, wear and use as directed.
- Do not put pressure on any part of your cast or splint. It may break. Rest your cast or splint only on a pillow the first 24 hours until it is fully hardened.
- Your cast or splint can be protected during bathing with a plastic bag. Do not lower the cast or splint into water.
- Only take over-the-counter or prescription medicines for pain, discomfort, or fever as directed by your caregiver.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- Your cast gets damaged or breaks.
- You have continued severe pain or more swelling than you did before the cast was put on.
- Your skin or nails below the injury turn blue or grey or feel cold or numb.
- There is a bad smell or new stains and/or pus like (*purulent*) drainage coming from under the cast.

Document Released: 01/06/2009 Document Re-Released: 06/05/2009
ExitCare® Patient Information ©2011 ExitCare, LLC.