Fractured Shoulder

You have a fractured humerus (bone in the upper arm) at the shoulder just below the ball of the shoulder joint. Most of the time the bones of a broken shoulder are in an acceptable position. Usually the injury can be treated with a shoulder immobilizer or sling and swath bandage. These devices support the arm and prevent any shoulder movement. If the bones are not in a good position, then surgery is sometimes needed. Shoulder fractures usually cause swelling, pain, and discoloration around the upper arm initially. They heal in 8-12 weeks with proper treatment.

Rest in bed or a reclining chair as long as your shoulder is very painful. Sitting up generally results in less pain at the fracture site. Do not remove your shoulder bandage until your caregiver approves. You may apply ice packs over the shoulder for 20-30 minutes every 2 hours for the next 2-3 days to reduce the pain and swelling. Use your pain medicine as prescribed.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF YOU DEVELOP:

- Severe shoulder pain unrelieved by rest and taking pain medicine.
- Pain, numbness, tingling, or weakness in the hand or wrist.
- Shortness of breath, chest pain, severe weakness, or fainting**.**
- Severe pain with motion of the fingers or wrist.

MAKE SURE YOU:

- Understand these instructions.
- Will watch your condition.
- Will get help right away if you are not doing well or get worse.

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