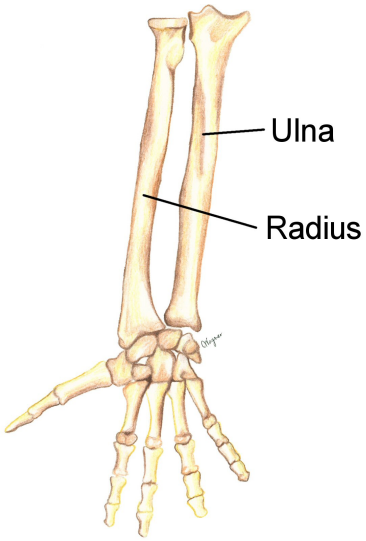
Radial Fracture

You have a broken bone (*fracture*) of the forearm. This is the part of your arm between the elbow and your wrist. Your forearm is made up of two bones. These are the radius and ulna. Your fracture is in the radial shaft. This is the bone in your forearm located on the thumb side. A cast or splint is used to protect and keep your injured bone from moving. The cast or splint will be on generally for about 5 to 6 weeks, with individual variations.



HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- Keep the injured part elevated while sitting or lying down. Keep the injury above the level of your heart (the center of the chest). This 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 towel between the bag of ice and your cast or splint.
- Move your fingers to avoid stiffness and minimize swelling.
- 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.
  - Do not put pressure on any part of your cast or splint. It may break. Rest your cast only on a pillow for 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 more severe pain or swelling than you did before getting the cast.
- You have severe pain when stretching your fingers.
- There is a bad smell, new stains and/or pus-like (*purulent*) drainage coming from under the cast.
- Your fingers or hand turn pale or blue and become cold or your fingers loose feeling.

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