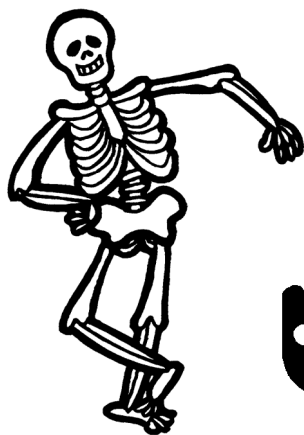


# Care of your Wrist Following a Fracture

Patient information - Orthopaedic Outpatients and Physiotherapy Departments



Any questions or problems should be directed towards your physiotherapist, doctor or orthopaedic nurse.

Not all wrist fractures are the same. It is important that you listen to the advice that the medical staff give you.



After removal of plaster you may notice that your wrist and fingers have reduced strength and movement, the skin on your hand and fingers is dry and scaly and your wrist may ache.

## Skin

If your skin is dry and flaky, wash your hand and forearm in warm soapy water and then apply hand cream.

## Bandages

If you are given a crepe bandage, this should only be for short term use, i.e. the first few days.

Remove for exercise sessions and at night.

## Movement and Strength

Even though your wrist and hand may feel weak and painful, it is important that you use your hand as much as possible for every day activities within reason.

To start with you will have difficulty lifting heavy objects, e.g. a pot of potatoes, but by gradually increasing the amount you use your hand, your hand strength will improve.

Short, frequent use to start with is best.

If you have a lot of discomfort after activities, a soak in warm water may help ease this.

Orthopaedic Outpatients

Department

Christchurch Hospital

Telephone: (03) 364 0800

Physiotherapy Department

Christchurch Hospital

Telephone: (03) 364 0680

## Hand Exercises

These are exercises that will help increase the range of movement of your wrist and therefore your function.

**Do each exercise at least 20 times** with a rest in between.

**Repeat 2 to 3 times a day** sitting at a table.

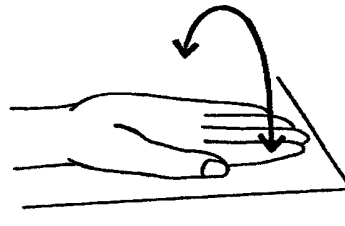
**1) Resting your elbow on the table:**

- your hand is in the air
- squeeze fingertips to palm
- relax and repeat



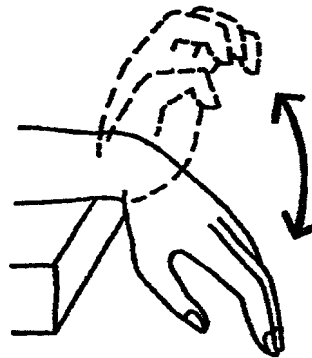
**2) With your forearm and palm flat on the table:**

- turn your hand over, aiming to touch the table with your thumb.
- stretch and hold 5 seconds.
- relax and repeat.



**3) With your forearm supported on the table:**

- your hand is relaxed over the edge
- extend your wrist and clench your fist
- relax and let your hand drop.



For more information about:

- your health and medication, go to [www.healthinfo.org.nz](http://www.healthinfo.org.nz)
- hospital and specialist services, go to [www.cdhb.health.nz](http://www.cdhb.health.nz)