



## Clavicle Fracture Handout

9250 SW Hall Blvd., Tigard, OR 97223  
503-293-0161

### WHAT IS IT?

Also known as a broken collarbone, a fracture of the clavicle is usually the result of an accident &/or a traumatic event. The most common place for an adult to break this bone is in the shaft, or middle third, of the bone. This can occur from falling and landing on the tip of your shoulder or an outstretched hand or getting a direct blow to the shoulder &/or clavicle.

### WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

Most commonly you will have pain, swelling & tenderness on the collarbone at the fracture site. There may also be some deformity and you may have heard a crack at the time of injury. Usually you will have significant pain when trying to move or use the affected arm.

### HOW IS IT DIAGNOSED?

Your physician will get several pictures of your clavicle to see the fracture and determine if there is any displacement. They will also examine your shoulder to determine your level of tenderness and the ability you have to move your arm. You should tell your physician if you experience any numbness & tingling.

### WILL I NEED SURGERY?

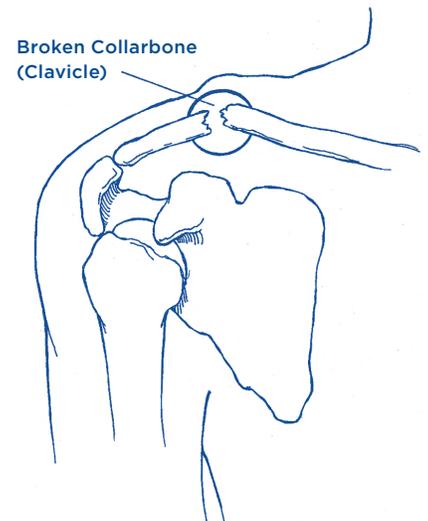
The vast majority of collarbone fractures heal without surgery. You will have a bump where the fracture was but unless the fracture pieces are moved a surprisingly large amount there is no advantage with surgery. Rarely the fracture pieces will not heal together resulting in what is called a nonunion which might require surgery.

### WHAT CAN I DO TO GET BETTER?

There is not really a way to immobilize a collarbone fracture with a cast or splint. Even a sling or figure 8 strap really does not immobilize the fracture at both ends. It is fine to use a sling in the beginning to help you to be more comfortable but after about the first week we want you to work on moving your shoulder to keep it from getting too stiff.

### HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO HEAL & WHEN CAN I PLAY SPORTS AGAIN?

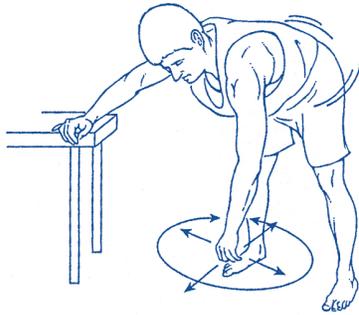
It usually takes about 4-6 weeks to be back to most daily activities and working out. Depending on your sport and willingness to put up with discomfort most teenagers are able to go back to sports by 4-6 weeks.



## SUGGESTIONS FOR SOME DAILY STRETCHES TO START WITH AT HOME:

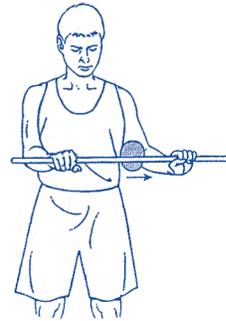
### SHOULDER PENDULUM

1. Lean forward at the waist, letting your arm hang freely. Support yourself by placing the opposite hand on a chair, table, or counter as shown.
2. Sway your whole body slowly forward and back. This will cause your arm to move. Let your arm hang freely. Do not tense it up.
3. Repeat the above swaying side to side and moving in circular patterns, clockwise and counterclockwise.
4. Do 3 repetitions in each direction.
5. Repeat exercise 2 times per day.



### SHOULDER EXTERNAL ROTATION

1. Lie on your back or stand with your arm at your side and your elbow bent to 90 degrees. Hold a stick, umbrella handle, or golf club in your hands as shown.
2. Using the stick turn/rotate your hand and forearm away from your body as shown.
3. Make sure you keep your upper arm and elbow next to your side.
4. Repeat exercise 5 times, 1-2 times per day. Hold each repetition 10-20 seconds.



### SHOULDER FLEXION

1. While standing near a wall as shown, slowly "walk" your fingers up the wall until you feel a gentle stretch.
2. Repeat exercise 5 times, 1-2 times per day. Hold each repetition 10-20 seconds.



### SHOULDER ABDUCTION

1. Lie on your back holding a stick, umbrella handle, or golf club in your hand as shown. The hand should be in the "thumbs-up" position.
2. Using the stick, slowly push your arm away from your side and as far overhead as you can without pain. Push until you feel a gentle stretch.
3. Repeat exercise 5 times, 1-2 times per day. Hold each repetition 10-20 seconds.

