

Further sources of information

NHS Choices: www.nhs.uk/conditions

Our website: www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk

Patient Experience Team (PET)

PET is available to help with any of your compliments, concerns or complaints, and will ensure a prompt and efficient service.

King's Mill Hospital: 01623 672222

Newark Hospital: 01636 685692

Email: sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net

If you would like this information in an alternative format, for example large print or easy read, or if you need help with communicating with us, for example because you use British Sign Language, please let us know. You can call the Patient Experience Team on 01623 672222 or email sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net.

This document is intended for information purposes only and should not replace advice that your relevant health professional would give you. External websites may be referred to in specific cases. Any external websites are provided for your information and convenience. We cannot accept responsibility for the information found on them.

If you require a full list of references (if relevant) for this leaflet, please email sfh-tr.patientinformation@nhs.net or telephone 01623 622515, extension 6927.

To be completed by the Communications office
Leaflet code: PIL202310-01-HSF
Created: October 2023/ Review Date: October 2025

Information reproduced with permission from
Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Trust

INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS

Discharge advice

Humeral shaft fractures



Healthier Communities,
Outstanding Care

What is a humeral shaft fracture?

You have fractured the middle part of your upper arm. These fractures occur away from the shoulder and elbow joints and can involve injury to one of the nerves in the arm, called the radial nerve. This nerve wraps around the upper arm and travels down to the hand. Injury to this nerve can cause an altered sensation over the back of the hand and some weakness to some of the muscles of the hand and wrist, which results in being unable to pick things up or carry things in the affected hand.

The damage to this nerve is usually temporary and complete recovery of the nerve happens within three to four months for 90% of patients.

You will have been placed into a brace like the one shown below to help the fracture to heal. This can take several months. At first, you will require help from others in applying the brace and for hygiene purposes.



Swelling and bruising at the fracture site is normal. Simple, over-the-counter pain killers will help to reduce swelling and pain. You may find sleeping upright for the first few weeks more comfortable.

You may also feel that your arm is floating, which is a common feeling.

You should:

- Keep your wrist and fingers moving to prevent stiffness.
- Use your collar and cuff sling to hold your arm in a comfortable position.

You should not:

- Put pillows under your elbow.
- Remove the brace for any reason.
- Drive whilst wearing the brace.
- Miss your appointment with the consultant.

At your appointment, the upper arm will be x-rayed again in order to check the position of the fracture. The consultant will then discuss further options for managing your injury at this appointment.

If you have any problems with your brace, you should contact the clinic (details below). These problems include:

- Pinching of the skin or the arm swelling (brace too tight).
- The brace slipping down the arm.
- Skin irritation/rash.

Problems and further advice

A fracture liaison service is available, and advice can be given over the telephone.

If you develop any issues or have concerns/questions we advise you seek help.

Call the fracture liaison nurses on 01623 622515, extension 4114 between 8am and 4pm, Monday to Friday.

Outside of these hours, or for urgent advice, please go to your nearest Emergency Department.