

Fractured clavicle (collarbone) - older children

What is a clavicle (collarbone)?

The collarbone is an S-shaped bone that sits in between the shoulderblade och the sternum (breastbone). A fractured collarbone is a common injury after falling on your shoulder or with an outstretched hand. Examples are falling off a bike/electric scooter/moped or when playing sport.

Symptoms

Clavicle fractures are painful at rest, but especially when you try to use your arm/shoulder. It is often very obvious just by looking from the outside that the bone is broken.

Examination

For the vast majority of collarbone fractures, the only thing needed is a thorough examination. If the bone looks to be significantly dislocated, an x-ray is performed.

Treatment

It is very rare that a broken collarbone needs to be operated on. Only when the fracture has caused damage to the skin or internal organs is it necessary to operate. Fortunately, this happens very rarely. For the first week after the injury it is often impossible to use your arm and it is a good idea to use a sling. The sling can be taken off for showering and sleeping.

Children's emergency department

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It can be hard to lie down to sleep, so sleeping in a half sitting position may help. You should take a full dose of normal painkillers (paracetamol and ibuprofen) for at least the first 3-4 days, and gradually reduce the dose over the following days.

You can stop using the sling after a week and start to carefully use your arm. The majority of people have full movement/use of their shoulder after 3 weeks. You should not participate in any activity where there is a risk you will fall over for six weeks after the injury.

Prognosis

Clavicle fractures often heal quickly and completely, but you can often see a lump on the collarbone for a long time. Sometimes the bone doesn't always go back to its normal shape. In the majority of cases this doesn't affect function. If you still have pain around the fracture when using your arm after six months, you should go to your *vårdcentral* (primary healthcare centre/GP).