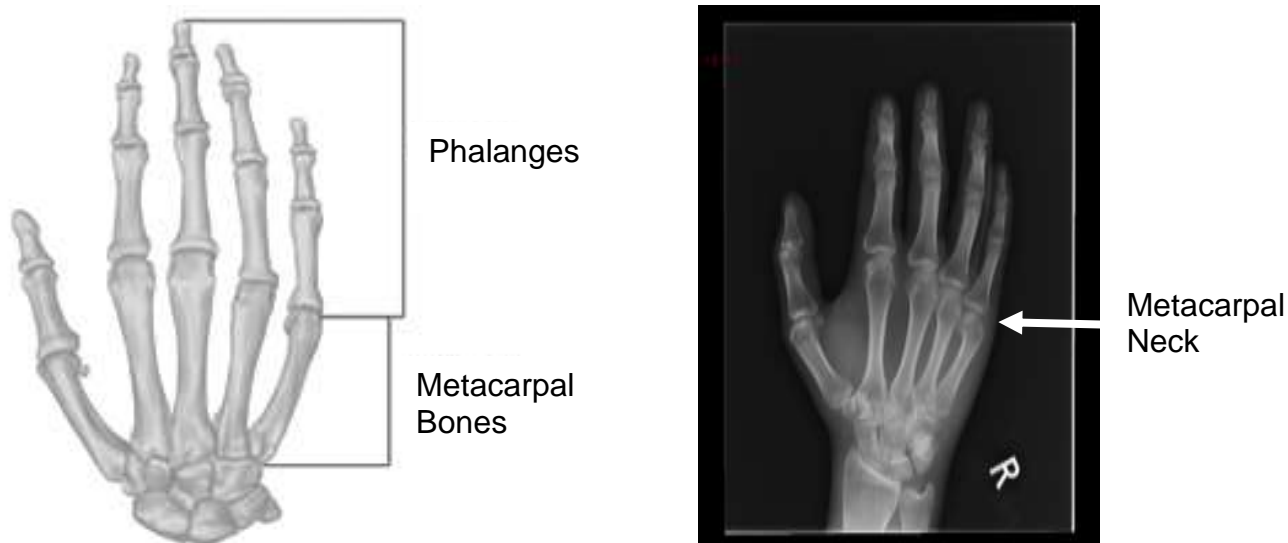


Patient information

Advice Following a Fifth Metacarpal Neck Fracture

Trauma and Orthopaedics Speciality



Metacarpals are bones in your hand, linking your fingers to the small bones in your wrist.

Your fracture has occurred in a part of the bone which normally heals well without problems with the passage of time.

The pain, tenderness and swelling you are experiencing should gradually settle over a period of several weeks.

To begin with you may require regular painkillers as it is important to keep gently moving and gradually resume daily activities within the limits of your discomfort. This will prevent stiffness, reduce swelling and ensure the quickest return to normal function. Your family doctor (GP) or a pharmacist can advise you which painkillers you can take.

Ice packs can be used to help in the first few days after your injury. A bag of frozen peas wrapped in a wet towel and placed on the painful side of your hand for ten to fifteen minutes every few hours can help reduce the pain and swelling.

If you have poor feeling in your hand please do not use ice as it can burn the skin.

At first you may have a weaker grip and your finger may droop when you straighten it. This should resolve completely over a few weeks to months but occasionally your finger may stay mildly drooped.

You may notice a lump on the back of your hand. This is new bone healing your fracture. You may also see that your knuckle looks lower than your other knuckles, this will be a permanent cosmetic change but should not affect your function.



You may benefit from strapping as applied in the pictures above.

This will provide comfort for a few days and will help with pain relief. It does not aid healing.

You should remove it for washing and wean yourself off it as your pain settles, aiming to remove it completely as soon as you feel able. You should not use this for longer than three weeks. You can purchase suitable sticky tape in pharmacies and replace it each day as required.

Exercises to help your hand to recover

These exercises will be most effective if practised regularly during the day. We would suggest doing them at least three to four times per day, repeating each exercise ten times. You should aim to increase your movement daily.ⁱ

1. Bend your fingers and straighten them fully as shown in the picture below



2. Make a fist and hold for five seconds as pictured below, then straighten your finger



You may resume contact and impact sports from six weeks after your injury but you may notice initial pain and swelling which should settle. Please avoid sports such as boxing and martial arts until twelve weeks following your injury.

Smoking slows down healing and we would advise that you stop, at least for the duration of the healing process. Further advice can be found on the NHS website <http://smokefree.nhs.co.uk> or please contact your GP.

You need to be able to fully control your steering wheel and gears before you drive.

You should contact your GP if you require a fit note.

If after three months you are still experiencing pain and/ or swelling which has prevented you from returning to normal activity please contact us on the number below

Feedback

Your feedback is important to us and helps us influence care in the future.

Following your discharge from hospital or attendance at your outpatient appointment you will receive a text asking if you would recommend our service to others. Please take the time to text back, you will not be charged for the text and can opt out at any point. Your co-operation is greatly appreciated.

Further information

**Should you have any worries or concerns a message can be left on the Virtual Fracture Clinic Hotline and an appropriate person will contact you between 10 – 3pm, Monday to Friday.
Any messages left over a weekend will be dealt with on Monday.**

Telephone: 0151 529 2536

For any urgent worries or concerns please contact the Emergency Department on:

**Royal Liverpool Hospital
Telephone: 0151 706 2050
Text phone number: 18001 0151 706 2050**

**Aintree Hospital
Telephone Number: 0151 529 2536
Text phone number: 18001 0151 529 2536**

Non urgent concerns can be discussed with your GP.

**Liverpool University Hospitals NHS Trust
Website: <http://www.liverpoolft.nhs.uk>**

Royal Liverpool Hospital Site Search Virtual Fracture Clinic

NHS 111 Service
Tel: 111

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Review date: June 2022

All Trust approved information is available on request in alternative formats, including other languages, easy read, large print, audio, Braille, moon and electronically.

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Dhammaan warbixinta bukaanleyda ee Ururka ee la oggol yahay waxaa marka la codsado laau heli karaa nuskhadda kale, sida luqadda kale, akhris fudud, far waaweyn, dadka indhaha la', Moon iyo nidaam eletaroonig ah.