



## DISTAL RADIUS FRACTURE. WHAT'S OK & WHAT'S NOT?

### Patient seen in ED and placed in a cast? Unsure of position? Really uncomfortable?

Distal radius fractures are the most common long bone fracture with incidence increasing. In Darwin the main pathway of care is via RDH or PRH ED, where a closed reduction is performed followed by application of a POP, which they are often advised to continue to wear for six weeks. But what happens if there are complications? And what is acceptable in regards to conservative management.

Early intervention is essential for good outcomes. What are the escalation factors to look out for?

- Comminuted fracture pattern
- IA component
- Changes to radial height or inclination, or volar tilt
- Widened scapholunate interval
- Positioned in wrist flexion in cast
- MCPJs immobilised in cast
- Increased oedema post cast application
- Restricted thumb or finger ROM
- Median nerve (CTS) symptoms
- Pain/discomfort within cast (> 5/10 at 1 week)
- Ulnar sided wrist pain

Appropriate casting/splinting, compression, and commencement of wrist AROM once stable is essential.





## DISTAL RADIUS FRACTURE - HOW CAN WE HELP?

### How can Territory Hands help?

Sometimes there can be delay after initial ED treatment, and people feel directionless or need advice. We can help by:

- Providing up to date, international level best practice treatment for distal radius fracture
- Fast track splinting/casting clinic for acute injuries with daily triaging and no wait list
- Modifying existing casts or providing custom splinting where appropriate

- If a cast is uncomfortable, too tight, or too long, restricting finger movement, we can address these problems early.
- Starting oedema management and finger movement early which is essential in preventing stiffness.
- Education, reassurance and dedicated time to answer client questions
- Assisting in determining when more specialist intervention is required.
- Close communication with referrers to ensure collaborative approach.

Treating acute fractures is our bread and butter so we know the nuances of symptoms and what is required to get a great outcome.

**It's easy to refer - just call 8981 6555 or email us.**

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