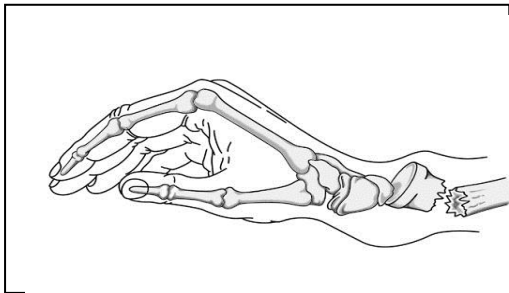


## Colles Fracture

### What is a Colles Fracture?

A Colles fracture is a break in the radius bone in the forearm near to the wrist.



### What is the treatment for a Colles fracture?

To allow the bones to heal in a good position your wrist was placed in plaster.

If the break was displaced you may have had surgery involving inserting metal work to allow the fracture to be realigned.

When the plaster is removed you may experience pain, swelling, stiffness, reduced strength and loss of function. Try to use your hand for light day to day tasks and gradually increase activity as the pain allows.

Ice may be helpful in reducing pain. **Ice packs** may also help reduce swelling. Wrap frozen peas / crushed ice in a damp, cold towel and place on the wrist for up to 20 minutes or apply gentle heat for 10-15 minutes. If your pain increases or becomes severe, then see your GP.

To help reduce swelling, **elevate the hand** when resting and try to pump the hand (make a fist and then stretch out your fingers). **Contrast bathing** involves two bowls of water, one with warm water (about bath temperature) and one with cold water and a few ice cubes in it. Place your hand in the cold water and open and close your hand 10 times, then straight into the warm water and repeat. Keep on switching between the bowls for up to 10 minutes. It is recommended you do this a few times a day.

To ease the stiffness use your hand for light activities and to do the **exercises** attached regularly. Increase your activities as pain allows.

### What is the prognosis?

As your hand and wrist have not been used for a while, it is normal to lose muscle strength. This will return with regular exercise and activity.

Certain movements may take longer to return than others depending on the severity of the fracture you sustained. It is normal to feel aches and pains in the wrist for the first few months following the injury. The wrist may remain thickened /swollen compared with the other hand and sometimes full movement is not recovered.