Fifth metacarpal fracture (hand)

You have a minor fracture near the knuckle (fifth metacarpal fracture). This fracture is treated with tape and a pressure bandage.

Summary

- You have a fracture in the metacarpal bone of your little finger (pinky).
- This type of injury almost always heals well without any loss of function.
- A routine follow-up is not necessary for this type of injury.
- You can remove the pressure bandage in the first week as your pain allows you to do this. You can remove the buddy tape after the first and before the third week if your pain allows you to do this.
- To prevent the finger from getting stiff, it is important that you start moving the finger again as soon as possible.
- You can find exercises for your finger in in our Virtual Fracture Care app in the App store (iPhone) or Google Store (Android).
- If you have any questions, or are experiencing problems with your recovery, you can call the 'Breuklijn' (fracture hotline) on workdays between 10.00-12.00.

Treatment

A fracture of the fifth metacarpal is a common injury. The fracture is treated with tape (buddy tape) and a pressure bandage for extra support.

0-1 week

- Remove pressure bandage as soon as your pain allows this.
- Keep wearing the buddy tape.

1-3 weeks

- Remove the buddy tape as soon as your pain allows this.

3-6 weeks

- Start moving your hand.

After 6 weeks

- Start sports.

Instructions

Follow these instructions for a good recovery.

- Use your hand as you would normally as long as your pain allows you to do this, even when wearing the tape and pressure bandage.
- You can remove the pressure bandage as soon as your pain allows you to do this.
- You have to wear the buddy tape for at least a week. After 1 week you can remove the buddy tape when your pain allows you to do this. Wear the buddy tape for a maximum of 3 weeks.
- Use a new pressure bandage and tape when you think this is necessary. You can buy new materials at the pharmacy or reuse the materials you got at the emergency department. You can find instructions on how to apply the pressure bandage in the Virtual fracture Care app and in this video (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wsrYBtwG0YQ).
- This fracture is close to your joint. Start moving the hand to prevent your hand from getting stiff as soon as your pain allows you to do this. You can find exercises in the Virtual Fracture Care app and in this information.
- After 6 weeks you can start sports again, if the pain allows. Do you practice martial arts? Then wait another 2-4 weeks before starting again.
- Are you in pain? Use a mild pain killer such as paracetamol (acetaminophen). Do not wait with the use of paracetamol until the pain is too much.

Recovery

- This fracture almost always heals well with time and use – no specific treatment is required and routine follow-up is unnecessary. It can take 6 weeks before you are able to use the hand.
- As the bone heals a lump will form at the fracture site and the knuckle will not be as prominent. This normal, and unlikely to affect the function of your hand.
- Physiotherapy is not necessary. If you are not satisfied with the function of your hand after 6 weeks, you can contact a physiotherapist.
- Does the pain increase, or does it not improve? Please contact the 'Breuklijn' (fracture hotline). See also the information at the bottom of this page.

Reapply pressure bandage and buddytape

If you need to reapply the pressure bandage and buddytape, please find instructions in this video (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wsrYBtwG0YQ). You can buy new materials at the pharmacy or reapply the pressure bandage that was applied in Emergency Department.

Exercises

After a fracture of the fifth metacarpal, stiffness and loss of strength can occur. The exercises below can be performed to support your recovery.

Follow the instructions below:

- Practice at least 3 times a day and repeat each exercise 10 times
- You can continuously increase the force and load.
- You can perform the exercises in warm water and with aids, such as a stress ball.
- Use your hand as normal as possible, this also exercises the finger(s).

Massage the fingers

You should start with a massage of the fingers. If you have (healed) scars, you can also massage them gently.

Bend and straighten the fingers

Bend and straighten your fingers so you feel a mild to moderate stretch. Do not push into pain. You can start this exercise as soon as the pain allows you to do this. You can start with bending and stretching the fingers with the help of your other hand. Then you can bend and stretch your fingers without the help of your other hand.

Virtual Fracture Care app

In our Virtual Fracture Care app, you can find more information about your injury. You can also find exercises here to improve your recovery. You can find the app in the Appstore (iPhone) and in the Google Store (Android). You can also scan the QR-code, automatically you will be transferred to the app.

Questions? Please call 'Breuklijn'

If there are any questions after reading this information, please call our 'Breuklijn' (fracture hotline) on workdays between 10.00-12.00.

Gerelateerde informatie

Specialismen

- Spoedeisende Geneeskunde (https://www.antoniusziekenhuis.nl/spoedeisende-geneeskunde)
- Chirurgie (https://www.antoniusziekenhuis.nl/chirurgie)

Contact Chirurgie	T 088 320 19 00