How to Care for Your Child with a Suspected Scaphoid Fracture

This leaflet will provide you with information about scaphoid fracture causes, symptoms, diagnosis, treatment and home care advice.

What is Scaphoid fracture?

- Scaphoid bone is a small bone near the base of the thumb.
- When it is broken, it tends to heal slowly because of the poor blood supply and some time it has trouble healing.

What are the causes of Scaphoid fracture?

**Scaphoid fracture can occur following:**
- Fall on outstretched hand.
- Blow to the wrist.
- Car accident.
What are the symptoms of Scaphoid fracture?

Symptoms of scaphoid fracture include:
- Pain.
- Swelling around the wrist
- Tenderness.
- Inability to move the wrist or/and thumb.

How is Scaphoid fracture diagnosed?

The doctor will ask few questions about your child’s health and examine your child. Your doctor may request X-Ray of your child’s wrist.

How is Scaphoid fracture treated?

Based on the clinical assessment and the x-ray finding, the doctor will be able to advise you about the treatment options that may include:

- **Removable Splint**  
  (splint is like a cast but it has a soft covering that allows room for swelling).
  - If a splint is used, your child will be given a follow up appointment within 10 days
  - A repeat x-ray may be required, and the splint may be changed to a full cast.
  - Some types of fracture can only be managed by certain types of splints.

- **Cast**  
  - If a cast was placed, your child will be given an appointment for regular follow up until the fracture has healed, this may take up to 12-14 weeks

- **Surgery**  
  - On rare occasions, some fractures may need surgery to fix the broken bone.
Home care advice

- Leave the splint or cast in place until it is removed by your health care provider.
- If your doctor advises to give pain medicine, you can give:
  - Paracetamol (any brand) or Ibuprofen (any brand)
  - Follow the instruction on the medicine package for the correct dose for your child
  - Do not give your child Aspirin as this can cause serious complications
- For swelling and pain in the first 24 – 48 hours after the injury:
  - Use pillows to raise the wrist of your child above the level of his heart.
  - Apply cold packs wrapped in a towel to the cast or splint for 20 – 30 min every 3 – 4 hours.
- Encourage your child to wiggle his fingers to keep blood circulating normally.

**Do Not:**

- Do not get the cast or splint wet. your child should bath instead of shower, and use a plastic cover while bathing and keep it completely out of the water.
- Do not put anything inside the splint or cast (including objects, fingers, lotions or powders).
- Do not blow hot air in the cast, for itching use a cool hair dryer or blow air in and around the edges of the cast or splint.

**When should I seek medical advice?**

Seek medical advice if:

- Your child gets a fever without a clear reason.
- Your child’s pain is not relieved by pain medication or gets worse.
- There are blisters, rashes, or raw spots on the skin around the cast or splint.
- A bad smell or discharges comes from the cast or splint.

Go to the Emergency Department if:

- Your child fingers turn numb, tingly, pale or blue.
- The cast or splint feels too tight or too lose.
- The cast or splint gets wet, cracks or falls off.