

## Help with this leaflet:



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[patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk)



We are currently working towards a smoke free site. Smoking is only permitted in the designated smoking areas.

For advice and support in quitting, contact your GP or the free NHS stop smoking helpline on 0800 169 0 169

# Addenbrooke's Hospital Outpatient Physiotherapy Patient Information Colles fracture advice sheet

## Document history

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This leaflet is designed to help people who have suffered a Colles fracture. It will provide advice and exercises to help you regain movement and function of the hand and wrist.

A Colles fracture is a fracture of the distal radius, one of the bones of the forearm. This is often sustained by falling on an outstretched hand.

Following a Colles fracture your wrist is normally immobilised in a plaster cast to allow healing of the fracture.

On removal of your cast, your hand and wrist may be stiff, painful and swollen. The following advice and exercises should be done to help reduce these symptoms.

Moisturising cream may be useful to help soften the skin.

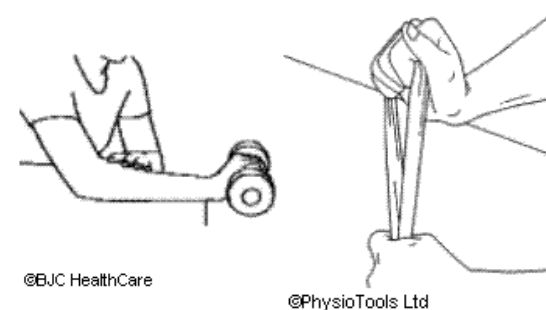
If your wrist/hand is hypersensitive, try and soak the arm in a bowl of warm water and a bowl of cold water, alternating between the two every 20 seconds for 10 minutes. Also, gently rub the area with different textured materials to help desensitise it.

To help reduce swelling:

- Elevate your arm regularly above the level of your heart.
- It is important to maintain the range of movement in the shoulder and elbow.
- Follow the exercises below and **use the arm as normally as possible**, but avoid lifting heavy objects.

11. Place your forearm on the table, with your wrist and hand off of the edge of the table holding a light weight or rubber exercise band. Lift your hand upwards keeping the forearm on the table.

Repeat \_\_\_ times.



## Pain relief

To help us optimise your treatment, it is important that you have adequate pain relief. If you are suffering high levels of pain please seek advice from your pharmacist or GP.

## Further advice

Please be aware that this handout is to be used as a guide. If you find these exercises painful please seek advice from your physiotherapist or GP.

## Contacts

Please contact our reception on 01223 216633 to leave a message for your physiotherapist, or to enquire about appointments.

**This information has been compiled by the Physiotherapy team at Addenbrooke's Hospital. You may receive this information during an appointment with a physiotherapist, from your GP or via our website at [www.cuh.org.uk/outpatient-physio](http://www.cuh.org.uk/outpatient-physio)**

6. Stand or sit. Place your palms together. Raise your elbows and aim to get your forearms horizontally in front of you.

Hold 20-30 seconds.



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7. Clasp your hands together and support your forearms on a table with your hands over the edge. Bend your wrist up and down.

Repeat \_\_\_ times.

8. Place your forearm on a table, turn your palm to face upwards then downwards, keeping your elbow tucked into your side. You may use your other hand to assist the movement.

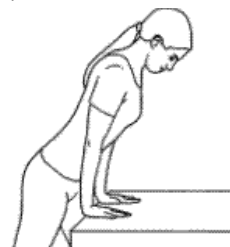
Repeat \_\_\_ times.



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9. Stand with the palms of your hands on a table. Keep your arms straight and fingers pointing forwards. Gradually increase the weight through your hands by pressing down and leaning forwards.

Hold 20-30 seconds.



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10. Stand with your elbow bent and palm turned down. Hold a light weight. Turn your palm up and down rotating your forearm.

Repeat \_\_\_ times.



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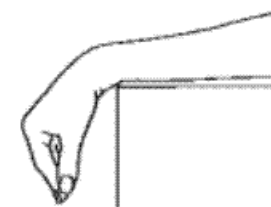
1. With your forearm supported on a table squeeze a soft ball.

Repeat \_\_\_ times.



2. Rest affected hand and wrist off the table. Keep the arm on the table. Move your hand down as far as possible bending at your wrist.

Repeat \_\_\_ times.



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3. Rest the affected hand and wrist off of the table. Keep the arm on the table. Move your hand up as far as possible bending at your wrist.

Repeat \_\_\_ times.



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4. Place your forearm supported on a table with your hand over the edge and palm facing down. Hold the fingers of the hand to be stretched. Gently extend the wrist until you feel the stretching at the inside of the forearm. Keep your elbow straight.

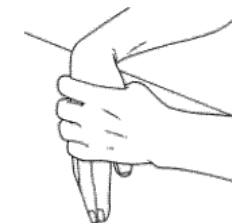
Hold 20-30 seconds.



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5. Let your hand drop down. Gently assist the movement with your other hand to feel a stretch along the top of your forearm.

Hold 20-30 seconds.



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