

## WRIST AND HAND FRACTURES

*Understand your injury.  
Know your next steps.*

### ***What are wrist and hand fractures?***

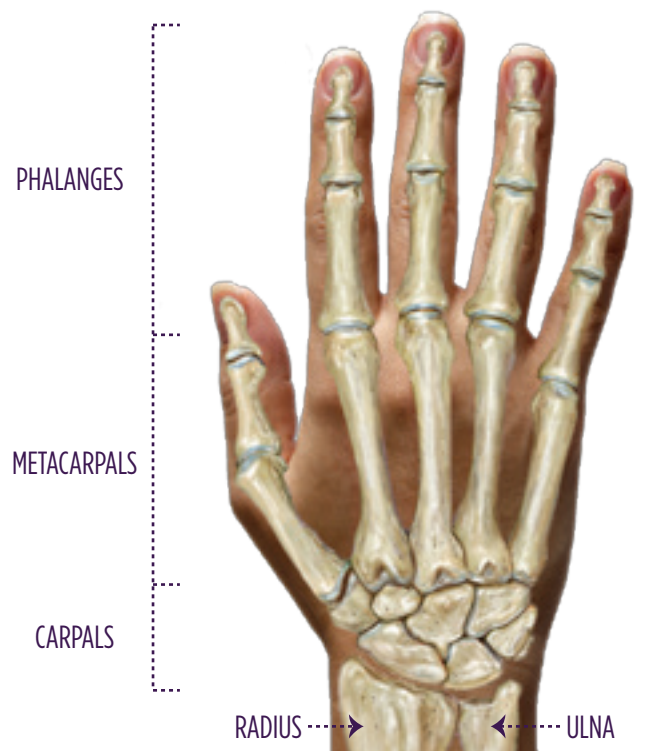
A fracture occurs when a force is applied to the bone that exceeds the strength of the bone. A classic example is when someone falls and lands on an outstretched hand or wrist. The force from the fall in combination with the angle of the wrist may be enough to cause a fracture or break in the bone. Fractures can be placed into two general categories: displaced or nondisplaced. In a nondisplaced fracture the bone is broken but has not shifted or moved out of position. In a displaced fracture, the bone has shifted significantly and the fractured ends of the bone are no longer in proper alignment. Your treatment options will depend on the location and category of the fracture.

### ***What are the symptoms?***

Symptoms of a wrist fracture may include pain in the wrist, tenderness, swelling in the wrist and/or hand, bruising, and occasionally a visible deformity. A significantly displaced fracture will result in severe pain and may cause numbness in the hand due to swelling. These symptoms can vary greatly.

### ***How did my specialist diagnose it?***

Many fractures can be diagnosed through X-ray and a complete physical exam. In specific situations, your specialist may wish to get an MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) or a CT (computed tomography) scan.



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## *What are the treatment options? What does my specialist recommend?*

Your hand specialist has developed a treatment plan based on your specific situation. His or her recommendation for you has been selected from the treatment options below.

	TREATMENT	DESCRIPTION	MY NEXT STEP
<input type="checkbox"/>	SPLINT	There are fractures that may be treated with a splint. This is essentially a cast that can be removed. Typically it is made by a hand therapist. A splint can allow early motion for fractures that are at low risk of displacement. This early motion helps prevent stiffness. Your specialist will instruct you when to wear the splint.	Set up therapy appointment with the patient coordinator: (651) 968-5201
<input type="checkbox"/>	CAST	A cast can be very effective at immobilizing the arm and/or wrist. The hard portion of the cast is composed of fiberglass and once applied requires a special tool to remove. It is imperative that the cast is properly cared for. This includes not getting the cast wet, not putting anything inside the cast (including a ruler or coat hanger) to scratch the skin, and only using the hand in the manner instructed by your specialist. A shower bag can be provided to you so that the cast doesn't get wet when bathing. If the cast does get wet, you need to contact your specialist's office and schedule an appointment to have a new cast applied.	Set up an appointment with the patient coordinator: (651) 968-5201
<input type="checkbox"/>	SURGERY	In certain cases, surgery may be the best option to repair the fracture. Your specialist will discuss any options and make a recommendation for your specific situation.	Set up surgery appointment with the patient coordinator: (651) 968-5201

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