

CLAVICLE FRACTURE

Your child has two clavicles (collarbones). Each clavicle extends from the top of the sternum (breastbone) to the shoulders (Picture 1).

Depending on the type, place and severity of the fracture, the doctor may use a clavicle strap, a sling (with or without a chest strap), or both to help protect the fracture and provide comfort. This strap helps keep the two parts of the bone aligned (lined up) to prevent painful movements of the parts of the bone. It may be needed for 2 or more weeks.

WHEN TO CALL THE DOCTOR

For the first 24 to 48 hours, your child may have some swelling in his arm. Swelling happens if his arm hangs at his side too long. Gravity pulls fluid into the hand and fingers. This leads to swelling, discomfort, numbness, tingling, coolness and color changes.

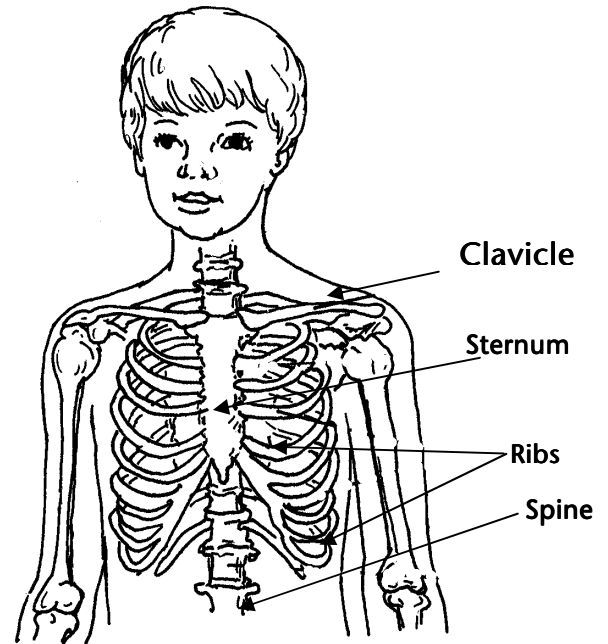
If his doctor does not limit your child's activity, he should do the following movements 5 to 6 times a day. The movements prevent swelling and stiffness and help circulation.

- Elbow: straighten and bend the elbow 10 to 15 times.
- Wrist: 1) wave the hand up and down 10 to 15 times.
2) make 10 circles starting to the right → then 10 circles starting to the left ←.
- Fingers: 1) wiggle fingers for 20 seconds.
2) make a fist, then spread fingers wide apart; repeat 10 times.

If your child's symptoms do not improve using the arm movements, contact your child's doctor. The doctor may need to see your child to assess his situation.

IF YOUR CHILD WEARS A CLAVICLE STRAP

- Tighten the strap so that the shoulders are pulled back and down (Pictures 2 and 3, page 2). Check the strap several times during the first day to be sure the closures are fastened securely.
- Starting on the second day, tighten the straps every other day for 7 to 10 days. Do this because the straps will stretch. Make sure your child's shoulders are pulled back when you tighten the straps.
- Your child will wear the clavicle strap day and night until his doctor says to keep it off. He should **not** remove it, even for bathing. Give your child a sponge bath instead, being careful to keep the strap dry.
- Your doctor will tell you when you may remove the strap for bathing. Put the clavicle strap back on immediately after the bath.



Picture 1 The clavicle bone inside the body

CLOTHING

- Your child should wear clothing that closes in the front or back - **not** pullover shirts.
- When dressing your child, put the arm with the broken collar bone into the sleeve first. When undressing your child, take the good arm out of the sleeve first.

SKIN CARE

- When you bathe your child, look for signs of skin irritation from the strap.
- If redness is present, especially under the arms, gently rub cornstarch on the irritated skin.
- If redness continues or the skin becomes raw, call your doctor or clinic.

ACTIVITY

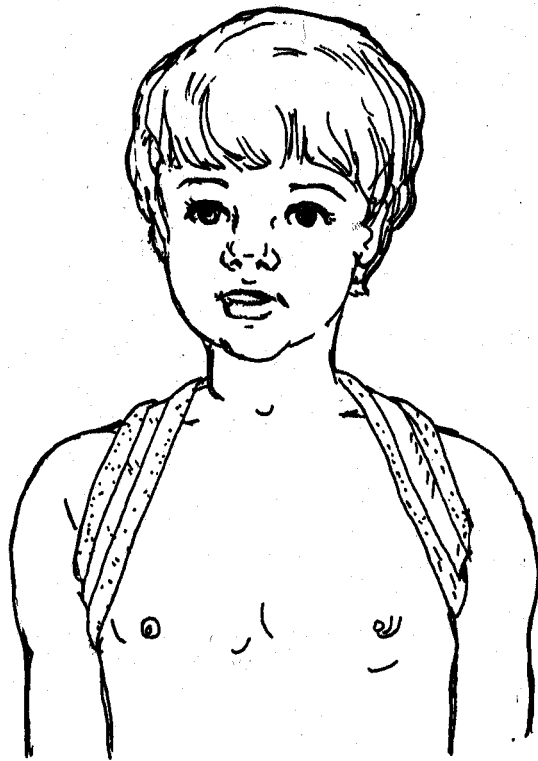
- Your child should not play any contact sports and should not lift or pull anything with the affected arm.
- Your child should be lifted by the chest or waist only, **not** by the arms and not under the arms.
- When holding your child's hand, hold the hand of the unaffected side.

FOLLOW-UP APPOINTMENTS

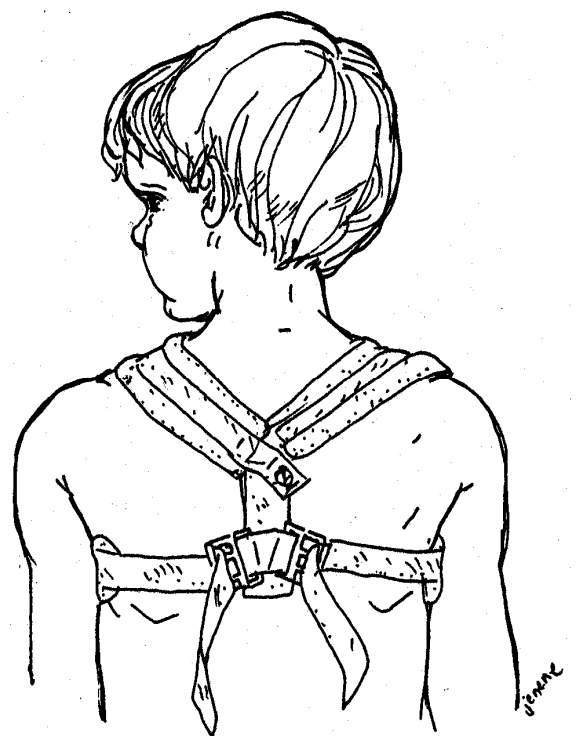
Make an appointment with your child's doctor or clinic for 1 to 2 weeks after the injury.

If you need a doctor for your child, call the Nationwide Children's Hospital Referral and Information Line at (614) 722-KIDS.

If you have any questions, be sure to ask your doctor or nurse.



Picture 2 Front view of clavicle strap



Picture 3 Back view of clavicle strap