

Proximal Humerus Fracture

You have a fracture (break) of your shoulder bone (the proximal humerus). Broken bones hurt. The bones will take 2-3 months to heal. Sometimes surgery is needed. We will take X-rays a couple of weeks after your injury, then get the shoulder moving to avoid stiffness of the shoulder joint.

- Ice, rest, use the shoulder immobilizer (brace), and take your pain medication as needed.
- Expect bruising and swelling to your arm, elbow and even your hand.
- The pain should subside considerably over the next few days.

It is okay to remove the immobilizer to move your elbow, wrist and fingers. This is encouraged once your pain has lessened to avoid elbow, wrist and finger stiffness. Keep the shoulder from moving for the first 2 weeks.

Begin pendulum exercises after a couple of weeks to avoid shoulder stiffness:

1. While using your good arm for support on a table or counter top, bend at the waist and let the broken arm hang.
2. Swing the arm front to back as well as side to side like a grandfather clock. Do the swings to increase the shoulder movement.

Expect to be unable to work fully for up to 3 months depending on the requirements of your work. If your job allows, you should be able to work with restrictions once your pain is under control, generally 1-2 weeks after your injury.