



**NATIONWIDE CHILDREN'S**  
*When your child needs a hospital, everything matters.™*

## **Helping Hand™**

*Health Education for Patients and Families*

# **Sports Medicine: Scaphoid Fracture**

The scaphoid is one of 8 carpal bones located in the wrist. A scaphoid fracture is a break of the scaphoid bone. The break usually happens from a fall on an outstretched hand. The scaphoid bone has a poor blood supply and is at higher risk of not healing as a result.

## **Signs and Symptoms**

- severe pain at the time of injury
- pain, tenderness, swelling and bruising around the fracture site on the thumb side of the wrist
- loss of motion in the wrist

## **Increased risk**

- contact or jumping sports (football, soccer, basketball, boxing and wrestling)
- sports in which falling onto an outstretched hand is common (snowboarding, skiing and rollerblading)

## **Treatment**

- Medicine
  - Anti-inflammatory medicines, such as ibuprofen (Motrin® or Advil®) or naproxen (Aleve®) may be recommended. Take these as directed by your health care provider.
  - Other minor pain relievers, such as acetaminophen (Tylenol®), may be used.
- Use of cold
  - Cold should be applied for 10 to 15 minutes every 2 to 3 hours and after any activity that makes symptoms worse. Use ice packs or an ice massage.

- Orthopedic aids
  - A cast may be used to protect the bones while healing for 4 to 8 weeks. Depending on the sport and position, a brace or splint may be recommended when returning to sports.
- Surgery
  - Surgery may be needed for fractures that occur in the part of the bone with poor blood supply or for fractures that do not heal properly.

## How to prevent

- Maintain suitable conditioning, forearm and wrist strength, flexibility and endurance.
- Wear proper protective equipment for the hand for all contact sports.
- For sports in which falling is likely, wear properly fitted wrist protectors.
- Use proper technique when hitting, punching and landing from a fall.
- If you have had a previous injury, use tape or padding to protect your hand before doing contact or jumping sports.

## When to call the health care provider

Call your health care provider or the **Sports Medicine team** at **614-355-6000** if:

- pain, tenderness or swelling gets worse despite treatment
- pain, tingling, numbness, discoloring or coldness develops in the hand
- new, unexplained symptoms develop

**To schedule an appointment  
with Sports Medicine, visit  
[NationwideChildrens.org/Sports  
MedicineScheduling](https://www.nationwidechildrens.org/SportsMedicineScheduling) or scan this  
code with your camera phone.**

