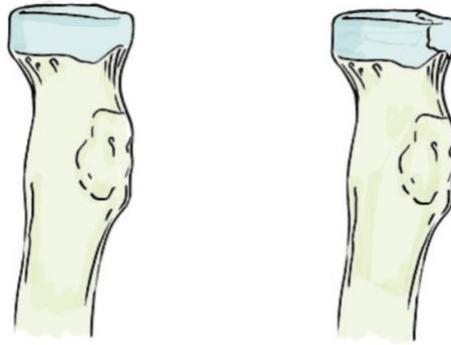


Fractures of the Radial Head

[Dr Jarrad Stevens Home Page](#)

Radial Head fractures are common injuries of the elbow. Most fractures will simply be a crack in the 'head' of the radius – the bone which helps as rotate the forearm.

Dr Stevens will assess your injury and organise x-rays and scans if required. If surgery is needed, Dr Stevens will help guide you through the process as a successful outcome will require recovery and rehabilitation often with physiotherapists or a hand therapist. Some fractures will still need a cast after surgery and other types of fractures can be managed in a sling.

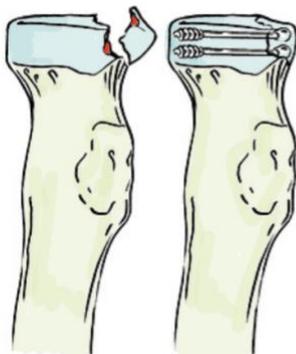


Normal Radial Head

Crack in the Radial Head

A simple crack in the bone, while painful, will normally heal well. Dr Stevens will oversee treatment in a sling. Follow up x-rays will be required.

If the broken bone has moved too much or if there is instability of the elbow, surgery to lock the bone back in place may be the best option.



Fractured Radial Head fixed with screws

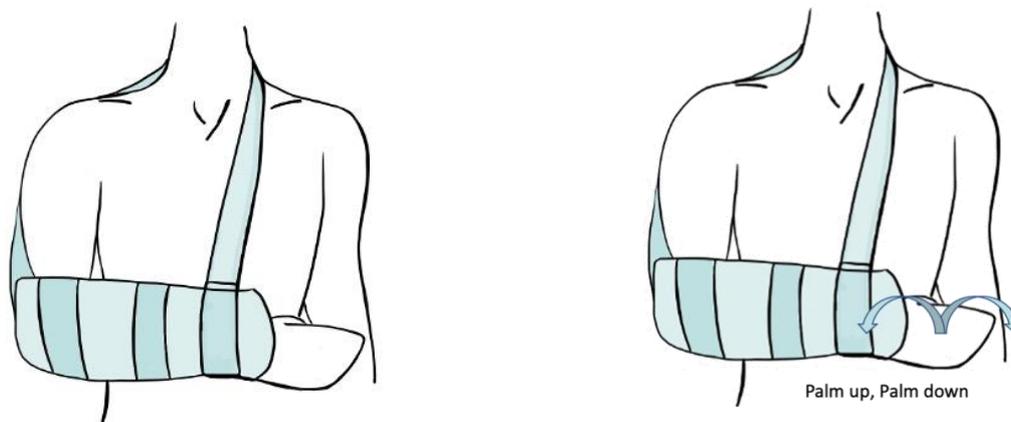
Once fixed, you can begin to move the elbow, hand and wrist under the instruction of Dr Stevens and your physiotherapist. Wound will need to be checked 2 weeks after the operation to make sure that the skin is healing well.

Occasionally the fracture will be too broken to fix. Removing the broken bone or a replacement may be the best option.

What to expect after surgery:

If you and Dr Stevens decide that surgery is the best option for your wrist injury, you will stay in hospital overnight following your surgery and will be discharged the next day with pain relief to take for two to three days as you need.

There will be a dressing over the surgical incision on the side of your elbow. You will have a bandage over the elbow and a sling. This helps keep the wrist still while it heals.



You can move your fingers, wrist and shoulder straight away, but wear the sling provided for most of the day. The sling helps to take the weight of your arm to let the elbow rest.

After 2 weeks you will have an appointment with Dr Stevens to have your wound checked, any stitches will be removed. Dr Stevens will then give you advice on exercises and physiotherapy.

Physiotherapy can be helpful to get your elbow moving and strong again, but do not start this until you have had your appointment with Dr Stevens at 2 weeks.

As with all surgery, there are risks repairing fixing your radial head fracture. These include infection, delayed healing or no healing of the bone. Difficulty with pain and range of movement may also occur. An important nerve, the radial nerve, may be injured as a result of your injury or the surgery to fix it. Sometimes surgery to remove screws or the plate is required in the future. Removal of the bone fragment or a radial head replacement may be required. Arthritis of the elbow may occur as a result of this injury.

- + Fever
- + Heavy bleeding or ooze from the wound
- + Increased swelling and redness around the surgery site
- + Pain in the calf muscles or difficulty breathing



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If you have any of these problems, please call Dr Stevens or his rooms on **03 5752 5020**