

# AC dislocation

## Dislocated collarbone (no check-up appointments)

**This leaflet provides you with information about an AC dislocation. You should know that your personal situation may differ from the one described here.**

Your collarbone has been dislocated. In your case, the collarbone has shifted in the joint between the collarbone and the shoulder blade (the AC joint). This is called a dislocated AC joint. The ligaments around the joint are also damaged. The treatment consists of wearing a sling, having a short rest period and doing relevant shoulder exercises.

### Overview

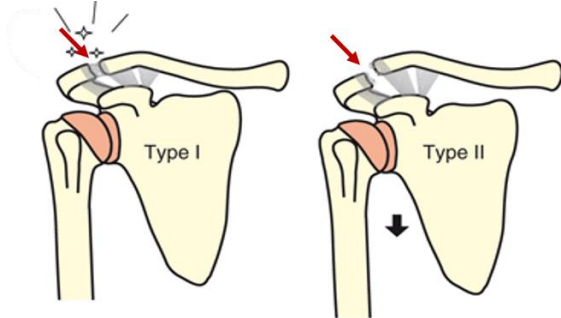
- Your collarbone has been dislocated. It can possibly stay a little out of place, but this is nothing to worry about. The pain and the function of the joint will get better over time.
- An outpatient check-up is generally not necessary, so there is no need to make a new appointment.
- You will be wearing a sling for the first week. You can immediately start exercising as much as your pain or physical complaints allow, according to the instructions.
- Please find an instructional video for reapplying the sling in the Virtual Fracture Care app.
- It is important that you start your exercises to prevent the shoulder from becoming stiff.
- Appropriate exercises can be found in this leaflet or in the Virtual Fracture Care app.
- If you have any questions or problems during the recovery, do not hesitate to contact us on workdays from 10:00 AM – 4:30 PM via the Fracture Hot Line.

### The treatment

A dislocated collarbone is a common injury.

Your collarbone is only slightly displaced (Rockwood type 1-2, see picture below). This dislocation often mends well. The treatment consists of wearing a sling, having a short period of rest and doing specific shoulder exercises. You may start doing your exercises immediately after your hospital visit.

This way, you will have less pain and your shoulder will heal the fastest.



### First week

- Use the sling for support if necessary
- Train your shoulder as much as your pain or physical complaints allow.

### Week one to six

- Take off the sling for as long as possible.
- Train your shoulder as much as your pain or physical complaints allow.

### *After six weeks*

- Use your shoulder as you were used to before your injury, depending on the complaints
- Keep repeating the exercises until your shoulder functions normally again
- You can resume sports or gymnastics. It can take up to 3 months before all physical complaints are gone.

### **Instructions**

The following instructions are important to allow for a good healing:

- Have you received a sling? Use it for the first week to support the shoulder. When you go to sleep you can take off the sling.
- Please find instructions for reapplying the sling in the Virtual Fracture Care app.
- You may immediately start your exercises according to the instructions. It is important that you start exercising right away to prevent shoulder stiffness.
- Use your arm and shoulder depending on your physical complaints. This means you can use the arm and shoulder for as long as you can tolerate the pain.
- You can find the exercises and instructions in the Virtual Fracture Care app or in the leaflet.
- For the first six weeks, you are not allowed to play sports in which you use your shoulder and/or arm. After that you can slowly take up your sport again, as far as your pain complaints allow. It can sometimes take up to three months before you can exercise without complaints.
- Do you have pain? Use paracetamol if needed. Do not wait to take paracetamol until you are in too much pain. Always take it throughout the day. You can take two tablets of 500 mg paracetamol up to four times a day at fixed times.

### **Recovery**

- Generally, a check-up at the outpatient clinic is not necessary. This injury usually heals completely within a few weeks. However, some swelling/height may remain at the end of the collarbone. It may take up to six weeks before you can fully use the arm and shoulder again.
- Physical therapy is usually not necessary. If you are dissatisfied with the function of your shoulder after six weeks, please consult a physiotherapist.
- Does the pain get worse or has the pain not subsided after three weeks? Please contact the Fracture Hot Line. If a check-up seems necessary, we will schedule an appointment.

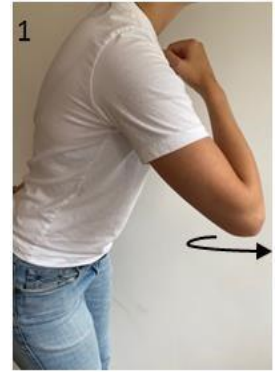
### **Rehabilitation exercises**

After your collarbone has been dislocated, you may experience shoulder stiffness and loss of strength. Below are some specific exercises you can do to prevent this as much as possible. You can also find them in the Virtual Fracture Care app. Important! Do not overstep your own physical limits while exercising. Pain can be a sign of overexertion. If you feel pain, stop exercising. You may feel fatigue or muscle aches. The pain will subside after a few days and you will be able to move better.

## Schedule exercises

### Week one

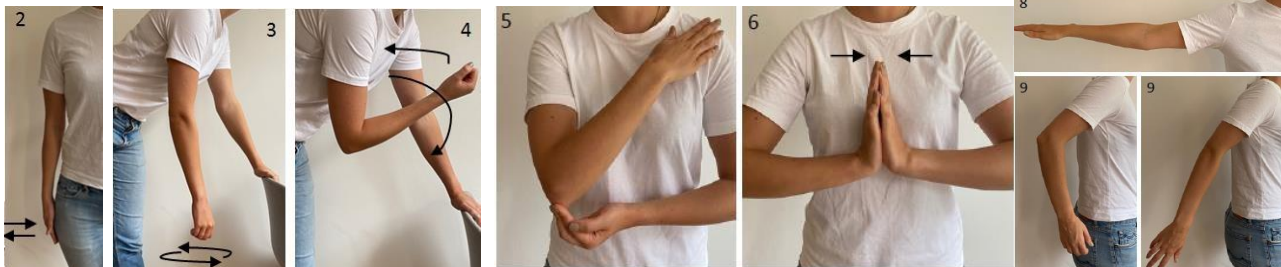
- Train your shoulder as much as your pain allows. Use the sling for support if necessary.
- Move the fingers and hand by making a fist ten to fifteen times a day.
- Straighten and bend your elbow ten to fifteen times a day.
- Press your forearm against your stomach. Hold this position for a few seconds and let go.
- Press your forearm against the side of your chest. Make sure your forearm is against your stomach. Hold this position for a few seconds and let go.
- Bend over slightly and make small circular motions with your elbow (pendulum movement look at picture 1). Repeat ten to fifteen times in a row, three to four times a day.



### Week two to six

Do the exercises depending on your physical complaints. Try to take off the sling for as long as possible. Do not proceed to the next step in the exercise schedule until you are able to perform the previous exercises. Repeat ten to fifteen times in a row, three to four times a day. The shoulder may also be fully moved outside the sling if the pain allows it: you cannot damage anything with it.

- Press your stretched forearm against the side of your body. Hold this position for a few seconds and let go (look at picture 2).
- Bend over slightly and let your arm hang down, stretched. Make small circular motions, clockwise and counter-clockwise (look at picture 3).
- Bend and stretch the elbow while bent forward (look at picture 4).
- Move your hand over your chest towards your healthy shoulder and try to tap the shoulder blade. Support your elbow with your other hand (look at picture 5).
- Place your hands against each other in front of your chest and press them together. You will feel the muscles at the front of your shoulder working (look at picture 6).
- Stretch your arm. Bring it forward and lift it to shoulder height (look at picture 7). Try to hold the arm here for a moment.
- Bring your stretched arm sideways up to shoulder height. If necessary, use a wall for some support (look at picture 8). Try to hold the arm here for a moment.
- Move your arm backwards slowly with a stretched or bent elbow (look at picture 9).
- Repeat the previous exercises, now gently lifting the arm above shoulder level. You may move your arm as far as the pain allows.
- Alternate the exercises and perform them at a leisurely pace. Repeat ten to fifteen times in a row, three to four times a day.



### *Week 6 onwards*

- You may return to full use of the shoulder as before.
- Swimming is a good exercise to get the shoulder function back to normal.
- If you feel that you can do fewer exercises due to less strength or pain, guidance from a physiotherapist is recommended. You can arrange this yourself with or without a referral from your GP.

### **Any questions?**

Do you have any questions after reading this information? Ask your question via the Fracture Hot Line.

### **Virtual Fracture Care App**

Find more information about your injury in our app. The app also includes exercises that promote your recovery. You can find the app in the App Store (iPhone) or Google Store (Android).

You can also scan the QR code. You will then automatically be redirected to the app.



### **Contact**

You can contact the Fracture Hot Line via 088-125 42 02 (business days from 8.30 AM – 10.30 AM).

