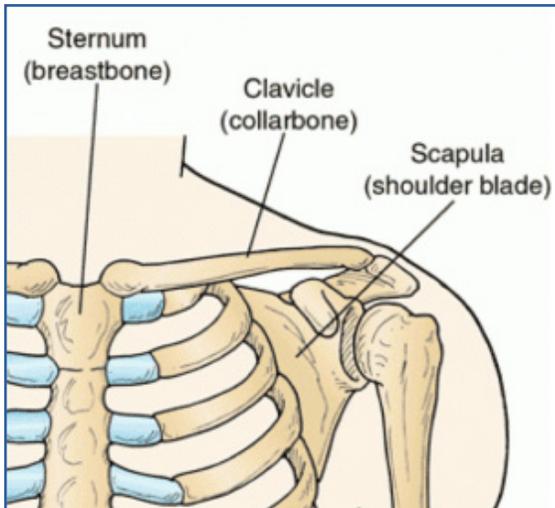


CLAVICLE FRACTURE

What is a Clavicle Fracture?

A broken collarbone is also known as a Clavicle Fracture. The collarbone (clavicle) is a long bone located between the ribcage (sternum) and the shoulder blade (scapula). The clavicle connects the arm to the body.

This is a common fracture, occurring in people of all ages. A fracture is often caused by a direct blow to the shoulder. This can happen during a fall or a car collision.



Symptoms of a Broken Clavicle

- Pain, particularly with any upper extremity movement.
- Sagging shoulder (down and forward)
- Inability to lift the arm.
- Swelling, bruising, and/or tenderness over the collarbone.

How is it Diagnosed?

There is usually an obvious deformity or bump at the fracture site. Gentle pressure over the break will bring pain. To pinpoint the location and severity of the break an X-ray of the shoulder will be ordered. It is possible that a CT or ultrasound imaging will be used to determine the details of the injury.

Treatment Options

Most broken clavicles can heal without surgery if the bone stays aligned. Treatment options include:

- Arm support – a simple sling or shoulder immobilizer.
- Pain medication
- Physical therapy – range of motion exercises to help prevent stiffness .
- Surgery to align the bones using plates, screws or pins for severe fractures.

Outcome

Whether your treatment involves surgery or not it can take several months for your clavicle to heal. It is important to maintain regular visits with your provider until the fracture heals as they will monitor your progress with an X-ray. A small bump may permanently remain over the fracture site. Most people will return to normal activity within 3 months. Your provider will tell you when your injury is stable enough to do so. Specific exercises will be reviewed to help restore muscle strength and flexibility in your shoulder.

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