

Broken bone

Summary

There are 27 bones in the hand. Some fracture (same as a break) more commonly. Treatment depends on whether it is open or closed, displaced or undisplaced, stable or unstable.

Treatment

- Open fractures need surgery to reduce the risk of infection.
- Closed undisplaced fractures are usually treated nonoperatively.
- Unstable fractures, based on the mechanism and pattern, may need a period of immobilisation in a cast or splint while the bone starts to heal.
- Displaced fractures are more likely to need an operation.
 - Closed reduction and immobilisation may be best if it is a stable fracture pattern.
 - Closed reduction and percutaneous wiring may be used if a fracture can be reduced to a satisfactory position. This will often lead to less stiffness long term compared to open reduction.
 - Open reduction is combined with internal wires, plates or screws to hold the bone reduced. Mobilisation is generally started early after the operation to prevent stiffness from adhesions between plate, tendon and skin. Releasing these adhesions is often necessary in a second operation. The plate and screws are often removed at the same time.

