



University Hospital Galway

EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT
GalwayEM.ie

Shoulder Injuries

(<https://galwayem.ie/guidelines/trauma-and-musculoskeletal/shoulder-injuries>)

Category

Trauma and Musculoskeletal (<https://galwayem.ie/guidelines/trauma-and-musculoskeletal>)

NB - With ALL shoulder injuries, test nerves and circulation to upper limb.

Fracture clavicle

Broad arm sling. Refer Virtual Fracture Clinic (VFC)

Fracture scapula (beware of other injuries as it takes a lot of force to fracture the scapula)

Broad arm sling and refer VFC.

Fracture greater tuberosity

Sling, Refer VFC.

Anterior dislocation SC joint

Ask advice

Dislocation/subluxation AC joint

Broad arm sling. Review clinic. If marked skin tenting, refer fracture clinic

Posterior dislocation SC joint

Ask advice

Fracture surgical neck humerus

Test axillary nerve, Collar & Cuff/Sling. Refer VFC.

Fracture shaft of humerus

Test radial nerve. If radial nerve deficit refer Ortho On-call. Otherwise Humeral brace/ POP 'U' slab & Collar and Cuff. Refer VFC. Ask advice if significantly displaced.

Anterior Dislocation of shoulder

Test axillary nerve and other nerves pre-reduction **AND DOCUMENT**. Reduce. Recheck nerves. Post reduction x-ray. Shoulder immobiliser. Refer VFC.

Dislocation shoulder associated with fracture greater tuberosity

Treat as for dislocation.

Dislocation shoulder, associated with fracture surgical neck

Refer orthopaedics, seek senior advice.

Soft tissue shoulder injuries

Broad arm sling for short time (2-3 days) only if necessary for symptomatic relief. Review clinic 2 weeks if necessary.

Rupture long head biceps

Refer to Physiotherapy

NOTE

Shoulder injuries with the exception of displaced fracture neck of humerus are treated in a broad arm sling NOT a collar and cuff

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