

Patient Care Guide for Joint Protection of the Shoulder

1. Protection of the shoulder

- Always support the fractured arm when moving your baby to prevent the weight of the arm from pulling on the shoulder.
- Never pull or yank on the fractured arm.
- When picking your baby up, put one hand under the buttocks and the other under the head. Don't lift your baby with your hands under the armpits.

2. Dressing

- Put the fractured arm into the clothing first when getting dressed.
- Take the fractured arm out last when getting undressed.

3. Positioning (When your baby is awake and supervised)

Sidelying: When lying on the non-fractured side, support the fractured arm using blankets or a pillow.

Try not to have your baby lie on the side of the fractured arm.

4. Supporting the arm

- You can use a safety pin to pin the sleeve of your baby's arm to the shirt so that the hand is resting near the belly button if your baby seems uncomfortable with movement.
- Make sure that you unpin the arm and apply the carseat straps according to the manufacturer's directions. You may then re-pin the sleeve if you wish.
- During feeding, it may be easier to wrap the arm with a blanket to keep immobilized and out-of-the-way.

5. Head & Neck Positioning

- You may notice that your baby prefers to keep their head turned to the side away from the fracture.
- When you go home, make sure your baby spends equal time with their head turned in both directions.
- If your baby continues to prefer to turn away from the fracture, try to hold them so they have to look towards the fracture side to look at you. Position them in their bassinet and changing table so they have to look towards the fracture side to look at you.

6. Follow-up Care

- No follow-up is typically needed. The bones typically heal themselves.
- Good follow-up with your pediatrician is essential. Maintain the joint protection until your pediatrician tells you to stop.

7. Questions? Contact the PT Department at 610-732-6791.