

# FULL CIRCLE HAND THERAPY

YOU'RE IN GOOD HANDS



## RADIAL HEAD FRACTURE

The forearm is made up of two bones, the radius and the ulna, which connect the elbow to the wrist. Working together, these two bones allow for the forearm to turn the palm up and down and bend and straighten the elbow. When the portion of the radius closest to the elbow breaks, it is called a radial head fracture. A radial head fracture is the most common elbow fracture in adults.

### CAUSES

A radial head fracture is usually caused by a fall on to the wrist or through a hit directly on the elbow. High impact sports, falling from a great height and osteoporosis (low bone density) may make it more likely for the radial head to fracture.

### SYMPTOMS

A fractured radial head may cause a decreased ability to move the forearm and elbow. There may also be swelling, pain and bruising in the elbow or forearm. At times, the elbow may have an abnormal appearance and numbness may be felt in the back of the hand and thumb.

### TREATMENT

If a doctor suspects that the radial head is fractured, an X-ray of the elbow will be taken. Some fractures will require simple immobilization in a cast or orthosis, and some will be managed with swelling control and gentle movement. Others may require surgery to realign or replace the broken pieces of the bone.

### HOW CAN WE HELP?

Depending on the type of fracture, we will either prescribe gentle movement exercises or fabricate a custom moulded thermoplastic orthosis. We will also manage any swelling and provide strengthening exercises once the fracture has healed.

