

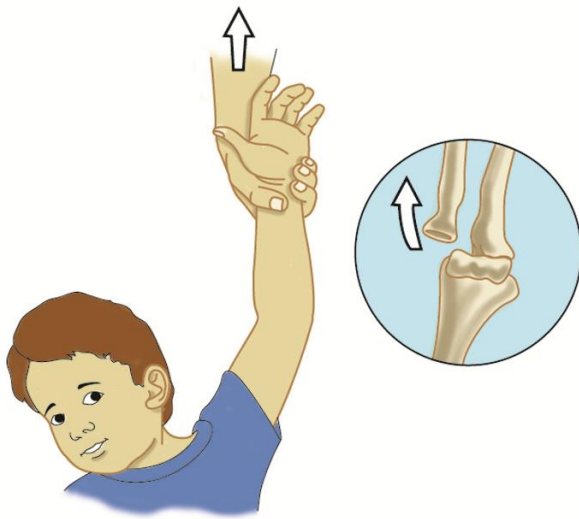


Royal Manchester Children's Hospital Paediatric Emergency Department

Information for Patients and Carers

Pulled Elbow

Radial head subluxation



Pulled elbow is a common injury in children particularly between the ages of one to four years. It is usually caused by pulling on the arm, twisting of the arm or a fall. It does not cause any long-term damage.

The doctor or nurse practitioner can perform a quick manoeuvre to move the bone back into the correct place. It will be briefly painful while this is carried out. Any pain usually goes away quickly, but it may take several hours for the child to use their arm fully. X-rays are not needed to diagnose a pulled elbow.

Occasionally, the bone does not slip back easily, and your child's arm may be placed into a sling. In this case, your child will be referred to the Paediatric Orthopaedic Virtual Fracture Clinic and be reviewed by an Orthopaedic doctor.

A child that has had a pulled elbow should not be in too much pain or discomfort. It is important to give your child appropriate doses of **paracetamol or ibuprofen** (widely available from pharmacies and supermarkets) to help with any pain. Your child should not require pain relief for more than one day after a pulled elbow injury.

Pulled elbow may happen again as some children are prone to this injury when young. It is important to try to lift your child by holding under their arms, rather than by their wrists or lower arms. As children grow older, the radius changes shape and pulled elbows no longer occur.

Useful contacts

If your child is experiencing any significant pain or if you have any concerns or would like more advice about your child's injury, please telephone your GP.

For an emergency that cannot wait until the next working day please contact the Paediatric Emergency Department on 0161 701 9102.