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Conservative Management of Clavicle Fracture

Clavicle fractures typically result from a direct blow to the shoulder, occurring most frequently to the middle third of the clavicle. The majority of clavicle fractures are treated conservatively. Following a clavicle fracture, a figure-of-eight clavicle strap, along with a sling, is fitted to the patient. The clavicle strap is worn at all times.

Weeks 0-4

The patient is instructed in active and PROM exercises to the shoulder. Pain should serve as the guide for the ROM obtained.

The figure-of-eight clavicle strap is continued at all times.

Weeks 4-6

As the physician indicates the fracture is healed, the AROM exercises should be emphasized if any limitation is noted. Active-assistive ROM exercises may be initiated for the shoulder as necessary.

Gentle progressive strengthening may be initiated by 6 weeks. To begin with isometric exercises or resistance in a limited, pain-free arc of motion is recommended.

Considerations

The patient wears the sling with a figure-of-eight clavicle strap until the pain subsides. Typically, the clavicle strap is discontinued within 6-8 weeks following injury.