

OLECRANON STRESS FRACTURE

A patient guide



What is it?

- A small crack or break in the olecranon (the tip of the elbow bone).
- Caused by repeated stress or overuse, not a sudden injury.
- Common in throwing athletes, weightlifters, and gymnasts.

What are the symptoms?

- Gradual pain at the back of the elbow
- Pain worsens with throwing, pushing, or weight-bearing
- Swelling or tenderness over the tip of the elbow
- Decreased strength or movement



Diagnosis

- Based on your symptoms and activity history
- X-ray or MRI may confirm the stress fracture

Risk Factors

- Repetitive throwing or heavy lifting
- Sudden increase in training or activity
- Poor technique or overtraining
- Inadequate rest between sessions



Treatment

- Rest – avoid painful activities
- Ice & anti-inflammatories for pain/swelling
- Physiotherapy: stretching, strengthening, gradual return to activity
- Splinting or bracing may be needed
- Surgery in some cases if the bone is displaced or not healing

Recovery

- Usually 6–12 weeks with rest and rehab
- Full return to sport may take longer depending on severity
- Following your rehab plan reduces risk of re-injury



Prevention

- Warm up properly
- Progress training gradually
- Maintain strong shoulder and arm muscles
- Allow for rest days
- Use correct throwing/lifting technique

Seek Help

- See your doctor or physiotherapist if elbow pain persists – early treatment helps healing.
- Call us on 08 8945 3799
- Book online at <https://www.movementforlifephysio.com.au/> or scan the QR code

