

# Wrist and Hand



Kaizen Physiotherapy & Performance has teamed up with some of the leading orthopaedic specialists from the Fortius Clinic, to boost your knowledge on common ski injuries. All content is educational in nature, and should not replace a medical assessment at the time of injury.

## What to do if you need more information

Thanks to our affiliation with Massage Me and their partners, clients have access to the Kaizen Physiotherapy & Performance injury advice service. We have experience dealing with injuries in the French Alps, and back in the UK. We also have capacity to speak to French healthcare professionals as Gus is bilingual. If interested, please speak to your host or to the Massage Me team and they will be able to pass on our contact details.

### On piste

- Mark an X up the piste, using skis or poles, to signal danger.
- Make sure somebody is slowing skiers down and informing people that there is an injury nearby.
- Ask somebody to ski down to the nearest lift to ask for help from Ski Patrol. If you're on your own dial 112
- If the injured person is unable to move themselves, wait until Ski patrol have arrived to determine it is safe to move them.
- If safe to do so, keep warm with layers. Insulating away from the ground by sitting on a backpack or skis is important for keeping warm.
- If you are feeling faint, keep yourself lying flat and take some deep breaths.
- After any injury – however minor – remove any rings from the affected hand before it swells!

### General advice

- Remember it's 112 for emergency services (it's worth saving it in your phone before you go). Your ski pass will often have emergency numbers on there too.
- Get insurance before you go!
- Wear a helmet.
- Save your insurance contact number somewhere easily accessible to avoid stress at the time of injury.
- Keep receipts of everything you pay for (not just medical receipts, depending on your cover, you may be able to claim for more than just the medical costs!).
- Any injury with significant swelling, deformity, pain or bruising needs assessment and often imaging.

Mr Dan Shaerf is a Consultant Trauma & Orthopaedic Surgeon specialising in Hand & Wrist injuries and conditions. He works in several clinics across London including Fortius and the NHS.



Dan regularly treats professional sportspeople and musicians. He also treats traumatic injuries to children from the age of 2 years and upwards.

Having been involved in a road traffic accident sustaining multiple fractures himself, Dan has a real understanding of what it is like to be on the receiving end of orthopaedic surgery. This gives him a unique understanding and insight into the experience of his patients.

For more info, visit [www.handandwrists.com/](http://www.handandwrists.com/)

### Broken bone?

Fractures of the wrist or scaphoid are common. If there are any pins and needles, numbness or visible bones then surgery is urgent and should not wait.

Any dislocation should also be treated urgently.

Most wrist fractures however can wait until return to the UK.

Fractures that extend into a joint of the wrist or fingers are best treated within a few days of injury.

Fractures should be treated in a cast or splint and elevated in a sling whilst awaiting definitive management.

### Not broken?

Full movement of the wrist or hand does not in itself rule out an injury.

If you still have pain at 2 or 3 weeks that isn't significantly improving, then make sure to get this properly assessed as it is common to miss fractures or ligament injuries.

A normal x-ray does not 100% rule out a fracture!

Skiers thumb – often presents with swelling and pain over the bottom of the thumb. Pain is worse when trying to pinch. This injury should be immobilised in a splint and can be treated on return.

## Returning home

Make sure you get advice on flying from the doctor before you leave.

Sometimes, anticoagulation (blood thinning medication) is prescribed to reduce the chance of developing a clot. This should be discussed with the doctor on site, rather than remotely.

Contact the airline and let them know about your injury

Keep the injured limb elevated eg in a sling with the hand at the level of the heart.

Make sure you keep your fingers mobile to reduce swelling and maintain function.

Ensure any casts or splints are split and rings removed to allow for swelling during a flight.

If you are in a plaster cast – keep it dry!

On return to the UK seek out a formal assessment either directly with a trusted surgeon or by attending your local A&E department to access NHS care in a timely manner.

Despite his best efforts, Gus from Kaizen has never sustained an injury on the pistes. He is, however, experienced in dealing with skiing injuries. From helping a friend after injury on the piste (the unfortunate inspiration of this poster), to working as a physio in the French Alps and back in London. Gus well equipped to help you manage and recover from this challenging situation.

