

MIKE FOSTER
Hand Wrist and Elbow Surgeon
Wrist Fusion

Problem

- Arthritis has developed between the bones of the wrist.
- Pain and stiffness

Cause

- Often secondary to scaphoid injury or intra-articular distal radial fracture or as an inflammatory process

Diagnosis

- X-rays confirm the diagnosis
- CT scan is used to look at all the joint surfaces to ensure that the wrist fusion is required.
-

Treatment

- Operation – usually day stay, but can be overnight stay
- General anaesthetic with arm block
- Decortication of the arthritic bones.
- Fusion of the hand to the forearm using AO wrist fusion plate and either bone graft from the hip or DBX.

Potential Complications

- Infection, haematoma, stiffness
- Delayed union
- Prominence or irritation from plate, necessitating removal.
- CRPS (exaggerated pain response from the nerves)

Post Op Care

- Wound check – ten days
- Cast for eight weeks
- X-ray at review at eight weeks to assess union