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Best Approach to Treating Distal Radius Fractures

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Best approach to treating Distal Radius Fractures

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**Background Information:** Distal Radius Fractures (wrist) are commonly caused by falling on an outstretched hand. The two treatments for distal radius fractures are surgical intervention through Open Reduction Internal Fixation (ORIF) or conservative non-surgical treatment. The ORIF surgery includes reducing the broken bone and then setting it back in place with screws, plates, rods or pins. Conservative treatment includes casting or immobilization of the wrist in order to promote natural healing.

**1.** Ask: Research Question
What approach to treatment (ORIF vs Conservative treatment) proves most effective in functional outcomes for distal radius fractures?

**2.** Acquire: Search Terms
Databases: Proquest, Google Scholar, Scopus, PubMed
Search Terms: ORIF, Distal Radius Fracture, Colles Fracture, Occupational Therapy, Outcomes, Distal Radius Fracture Treatment, Mnh, Conservative Treatment

**3.** Appraise: Study Quality
Patient/Client groups: Distal Radius Fracture
Intervention: Conservative Treatment
Comparison: Surgical Intervention through ORIF
Outcome: Functionality

**4.** Apply: Conclusions for Practice
Research related to functional outcomes for optimal treatment for distal radius fractures are mixed. Results more likely to be dependent on key factors, namely: age, severity of injury, comorbidities, etc. Radiological improvements more likely to be observed in ORIF treatment. Improvements in quality of life more likely resulted from conservative treatment. Efforts understanding outcomes related to distal radius fractures have been primarily limited to orthopedic and other medical journals.

Occupational therapy and other allied health have been less likely to explore functional outcomes related to this type of injury. Given 50,000 (Nelson, 2018) cases of distal radius fractures reported in the US per year, this area of research is in need of greater attention to its relationship to functional performance.

**References**

**Outcomes, Distal Radius Fracture Treatment, Mnh, Conservative Treatment**

**ORIF treatment resulted in radiological improvements, while conservative treatment improved quality of life.**