Additional Notes

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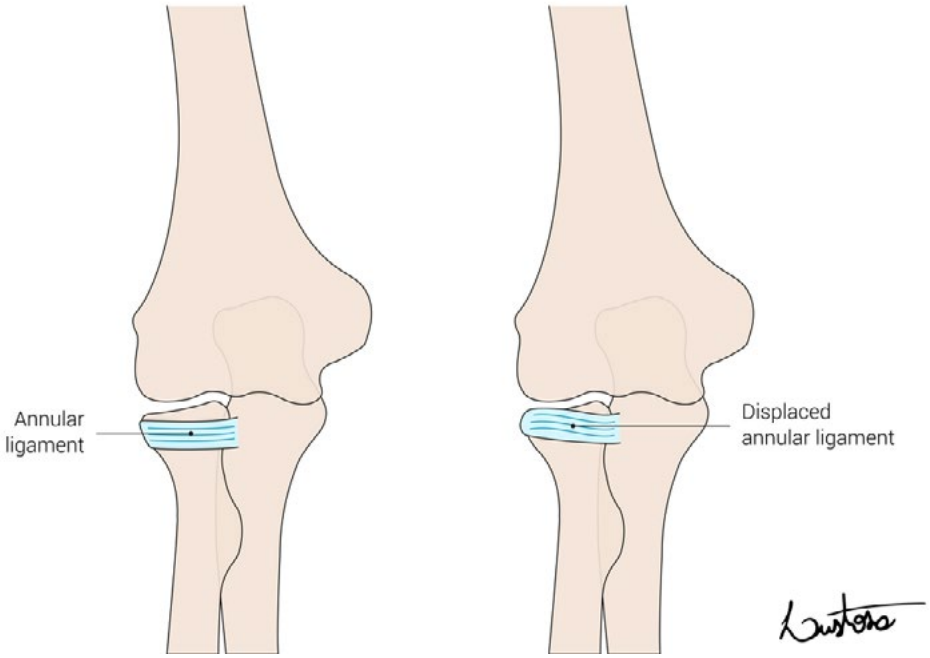
Pulled Elbow

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What is a pulled elbow?

A pulled elbow is a common minor injury which can affect children under the age of 5. It occurs when one of the forearm bones, called the radius, partially slips out of a ring shaped ligament at the elbow. It is extremely rare for it to cause any long term problems but can occur because a child's joints are not completely developed and the ring shaped ligament is looser in early childhood.



It usually happens when the child's arm is accidentally pulled e.g. falling over whilst an adult is holding their hand or pulling an arm through a sleeve whilst dressing. The child usually cries briefly and is then reluctant to use that arm.

Management

An X-Ray of the elbow is not usually necessary as it will not diagnose a pulled elbow.

After being given simple pain relief, your child's arm will need to be moved in a particular way to manipulate the head of the radius bone back into the correct position. This can be painful for a few seconds but in most cases, they will be able to use their arm again quite quickly after the manoeuvre.

Occasionally it is not possible to solve the problem by performing the manoeuvre the first time. If this occurs, the arm is usually rested in a sling and we will arrange to see the child again in our Emergency Department a few days later. Often it resolves itself before you are seen again but if not, another attempt may be needed.

If you have any concerns, please come back to the Emergency Department or see your GP.

Pulled Elbow