



Patient story

Hear the patient journey of Benjamin Brown

Benjamin Brown works in the consultancy industry and he is a passionate rugby player. He broke his forearm during a league match and has been wearing a Medartis implant ever since. Born near Birmingham, the 27-year-old has been playing rugby for two and a half years with the Basel Rugby Club in his new home country. We wanted to hear his story and find out how Medartis solutions helped in restoring his life.

Benjamin is a sports addict. He is versatile and plays a variety of sports, but his passion is for the English national sport. He has been playing rugby since he was 5 years old. Benjamin is aware of the danger. Rugby is a risky sport and you have to accept that you can get hurt, even if you learn how to protect yourself naturally in training from a young age. Nevertheless, injuries are frequent. It is not surprising that approximately 1 in 4 rugby players are injured during the season, with each player performing an average 20- 40 tackles per match. According to statistics from the "Australian Rugby Union", over 50% of injuries reported are minimal or mild. Shoulder (18%), knee (13%), thigh (12%) and ankle (12%) account for half of all injuries. In contrast to players of the American variant, the players in rugby union players are almost unprotected. Most wear a mouth guard, but few wear a head guard. Strong muscles give a slight sense of security.

Benjamin is aware of the danger. Rugby is a risky sport and injuries can never be ruled out, even though players get trained to fall safely, learn how to tackle properly and know what actions to avoid, he mentions. Benjamin has also had several injuries. But the complicated Ulnar fracture last October was the worst injury he has had so far in his sporting career. In a championship match, his arm hit the shin of an opposing player. Shortly afterwards, he had to be substituted. The pain was limited, but when he touched his arm, he felt that something was wrong. He could not move his bone.

The next day he went to the nearby hospital, the Hirslanden clinic in the suburbs of Basel. For the doctor in charge, Dr. Nicolas Schmutz, Benjamin's case was clear: the bone was displaced and the ulna shaft fracture needed open reduction and a plate fixation. In a short, one-and-a-half-hour operation, the bone was repositioned and fixed with a titanium Apts 2.8 Trilock Ulna Shaft Plate and 11 screws.

Thanks to the surgery, the young athlete was soon able to start fitness training again. He wore an elbow splint for protection during the first two weeks and started mobilization in the first week. He did not need physiotherapy. Just two weeks after the surgical treatment, he was able to do his first exercises and go back to a reduced work week. He recovered full range of movement after six weeks, and within three months, the young athlete was already back on skis in the Swiss Alps. Since January, he has also been playing rugby again with his team, the 'Basel 1st XV'. As camaraderie is important in rugby, Benjamin was glad that the hospital allowed visitors throughout day, as the Basel rugby players were able to visit their colleague regularly in the hospital. Benjamin is proud to be part of a team with such great integrity and collegiality. Even after the hospital stay, the other players took care of their injured teammate and took him to leisure activities with them.

"As soon as I was back on the pitch with my friends, all thoughts of quitting were completely gone."

We wanted to know from an amateur athlete this type of accident makes you think about quitting. Despite the very pleasant experience at the hospital and the smooth recovery, it was a hard thing to go through. "I am such an active person and I rely so much on sport as my number one release. I went through a difficult period when I was unable to continue the majority of my social and cognitive outlets that sport offers", commented Mr. Brown. As soon as he was back on the pitch with his friends, all thoughts of quitting rugby were soon gone: "My teammates were so fantastic to me. They motivated me, encouraged me and built me up." In his view, the social function of sport should not be underestimated. In his team, the Basel 1st XV half, in which half the players are locals and half are expats, 6-7 languages are spoken. Cultural and social exchange outside of work are important for assimilation and integration when people are far away from home. "It has been my number one best thing that I have done since I came to Switzerland."

