

Odontoid fractures

Anderson and D'Alonzo classified odontoid fractures according to their location – this classification also gave an indication as to the prognosis.

Type 1 fractures are mechanically stable and represent avulsion of the alar ligament(s).

Type 2 fractures are located at the base of the odontoid. These are the commonest type of fracture and have the worst natural history. Mechanical instability and non-union are the possible sequelae.

Type 3 fractures arise through the cancellous bone of the vertebral body and have a favorable prognosis if they can be reduced.