EXTERNAL FIXATION OF DISTAL RADIUS FRACTURES

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External fixation has been used for the treatment of distal radius fractures for more than 50 years. Although the fixator configurations have undergone considerable modification over time, the type of fixator itself is not as important as the underlying principles that provide the foundation of external fixation. Although volar plate fixation is currently in vogue, the indications for external fixation remain largely unchanged. New fixator designs have also expanded the traditional usage to include nonbridging applications that allow early wrist motion. The following discussion focuses on the myriad uses for external fixation as well as the shortcomings and potential pitfalls.