

## Toddler's Fracture (Radiological Evidence)

Your child has broken (fractured) the leg (tibia). This fracture usually heals well in a simple splint. The splint will help keep your child comfortable while the bone heals. While in the splint, your child should avoid walking on the injured limb.

### **The first 24-48 hours after injury**

Your child's leg, foot and toes may swell in the first 24 - 48 hours after injury. To decrease this swelling, your child should rest the leg up on a pillow when sitting or lying down.



You should encourage your child to bend and straighten the toes every hour during waking hours. You should check the temperature, colour and movement of the toes about every 4 hours during waking hours.

Your child will have pain in the leg initially. Medication such as Ibuprofen and/or Paracetamol as needed (as long as not allergic) following the directions on the package will help decrease the pain.

### **Signs of a problem**

- Persistent pain in the foot or ankle may indicate a splint that is too tight.
- Severe pain when moving the toes.
- Toes that are blue or white.
- Toes that are cold (you can compare them to the toes on the other foot).
- Toes that cannot curl up or straighten out.
- Numbness or pins and needles in the foot.

If your child has any of these signs, rest your child's leg on a pillow while lying down for 30 minutes.



If the problem does not get better, call your GP, or go to the Emergency Department.

## Follow-up appointment

Children with a toddler's fracture do not require follow-up with the Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon, or need to get another x-ray.

## After 3 weeks

Remove the splint 3 weeks after your child's injury. With the splint off, your child can begin using the leg. At first, leg may be stiff. Your child will limp, this is normal. The movement will get better with time but this may take up to 3 months.

Physiotherapy is not usually necessary.

Occasionally, children who are very comfortable will remove the splint and resist wearing it prior to 3 weeks. In this instance, a simple bandage or no support may suffice with close observation of comfort levels.

To decrease the risk of re-breaking the leg, your child should not participate in high-risk activities such as playing on monkey-bars, trampolines or contact sports for about 6 weeks after the injury. However, your child can return to low-risk sports such as swimming as soon as the leg is comfortable.

Your child will limp for up to 3 months after sustaining a toddler's fracture.

If your child continues to limp after that time, contact your GP.

## Key Points

- Your child uses the splint to keep comfortable as the broken bone heals.
- Your child may begin to walk on the splint, this indicates fracture healing.
- You will take off the splint at home after 3 weeks after injury.
- Your child will need to avoid high-risk activities for a total of about 6 weeks after the injury.
- Your child will limp for up to 3 months after sustaining a toddler's fracture.
- If your child limps 3 months after sustaining the injury, contact your GP.