

## Stable foot fracture: Non-operative management

Your child has sustained a fracture to the foot. This fracture usually heals well in a walking boot. The boot will help keep your child comfortable while the bone heals. While your child is in bed, or in the bath, or in the shower they do not need to wear the boot.

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

Your child's foot and toes may swell in the first 24-48 hours after the injury. To decrease this swelling, your child should rest the foot 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 foot 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. Elevation is key in providing pain relief.



### **Signs of a problem**

- Severe pain when moving the toes.
- Toes that are blue or white.
- Toes that are cold (you can compare them to the toes of 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 foot 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**

You will be notified by the Trauma Assessment Clinic Physiotherapist with regard to review in the Fracture Clinic with the Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon, usually about 1 week after the injury. Your child can begin to walk on the injured foot as soon as comfortable. The boot can be removed 6 weeks after the injury.

### **After 6 weeks**

Remove the boot when comfortable (approximately 6 weeks after your child's injury). At first, the ankle may be stiff. The movement will get better with time but this may take up to 3 months. Your child will limp for 3 months after the injury, this is normal. Physiotherapy is not usually necessary.

To decrease the risk of re-breaking the foot, your child should not participate in high-risk activities such as playing on monkey-bars, trampoline, rugby, or other contact sports for 8 weeks after the injury. However, your child can return to low risk sports such as swimming as soon as the foot is comfortable.

Contact your GP if your child has not regained normal foot movement 3 months after the injury.

### **Key Points**

- Your child needs a boot to help heal the broken foot.
- Your child does not need to wear the boot in bed, or in the bath, or in the shower.
- You will take off the boot permanently 6 weeks after the injury.
- Your child will need to avoid high-risk activities for a total of 8 weeks after the injury.
- Your child will limp for up to 3 months after the injury, this is normal.
- If your child limps 3 months after sustaining the injury, contact your GP.