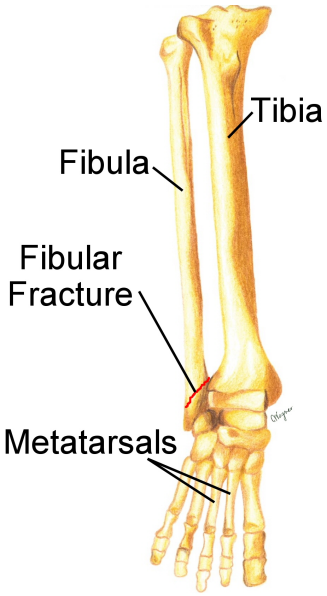
Fibular Fracture, Displaced, (Adult, Ankle), Treated With ORIF

You have a *fracture* (break) of your fibula at the end of this bone that makes up part of your ankle. This is the bone in your lower leg located on the outside of the leg and it makes up the bump you feel on the outside of your ankle. The fracture you have is **displaced**. This means the bones are not in good healing position.



Your displaced fracture is at the part of the fibula that is located at the ankle. Because of this the bones must be put back into position surgically. This is called ORIF. ORIF stands for Open Reduction and Internal Fixation. This surgical repair of your ankle will give the best chance for your ankle to heal right and decrease the chances of later arthritis and disability, which may occur with even the best of treatment and care. These fractures are easily diagnosed with x-rays.

LET YOUR CAREGIVERS KNOW ABOUT THE FOLLOWING:

- Allergies
- Medications taken including herbs, eye drops, over the counter medications, and creams
- Use of steroids (by mouth or creams)
- History of bleeding or blood problems
- Previous problems with anesthetics or novocaine.
- History of blood clots (*thrombophlebitis*)
- Previous surgery.
- Other health problems.
- Family history of anesthetic problems.
- Possibility of pregnancy, if this applies

RISKS & COMPLICATIONS: All surgery is associated with risks. Some of these risks are:

- Excessive bleeding.
- Infection.
- Post traumatic arthritis.
- Failure to heal properly resulting in an unstable ankle.
- Stiffness of ankle following repair.

BEFORE AND AFTER YOUR SURGERY

Prior to surgery an IV (intravenous line connected to your vein for giving fluids) may be started and you will be given an *anesthetic* (medications and gas to make you sleep). This is usually an outpatient procedure. This means you will be released from the hospital the same day. You will receive physical therapy and other care until you are doing well.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

FOLLOWING SURGERY

- You may resume normal diet and activities as directed or allowed.
- Keep ice packs (a bag of ice wrapped in a towel) on the surgical area for twenty minutes, four times per day, for the first two days following surgery.
- Change dressings if necessary or as directed.
- If you have a plaster or fiberglass ***cast***:
  - Do not try to scratch the skin under the cast using sharp or pointed objects.
  - Check the skin around the cast every day. You may put lotion on any red or sore areas.
  - Keep your cast dry and clean.
- Do not put pressure on any part of your cast or splint until it is fully hardened.
- Your cast or splint can be protected during bathing with a plastic bag. Do not lower the cast or splint into

water.
- Only take over-the-counter or prescription medicines for pain, discomfort, or fever as directed by your caregiver.
- Use crutches as directed and do not exercise leg unless instructed.
- Your caregiver may instruct you to remove your cam boot.
- **These are not fractures to be taken lightly! If these bones become displaced and get out of position, it may eventually lead to arthritis and disability. Problems often follow even the best of care. Follow the directions of your caregiver.**
- Keep appointments as directed.
- **Warning**: Do not drive a car or operate a motor vehicle until your caregiver specifically tells you it is safe to do so.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- Redness, swelling, or increasing pain in the wound.
- Pus coming from wound.
- An unexplained oral temperature above 102° F (38.9° C) develops, or as your caregiver suggests.
- A bad smell coming from the wound or dressing.
- A breaking open of the wound (edges not staying together) after sutures or staples have been removed.
- Numbness in the foot that is getting worse.
- Severe pain when you move your toes.

If you do not have a window in your cast for observing the wound, a discharge or minor bleeding may show up as a stain on the outside of your cast. Report these findings to your caregiver.

MAKE SURE YOU:

- Understand these instructions.
- Will watch your condition.
- Will get help right away if you are not doing well or get worse.

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