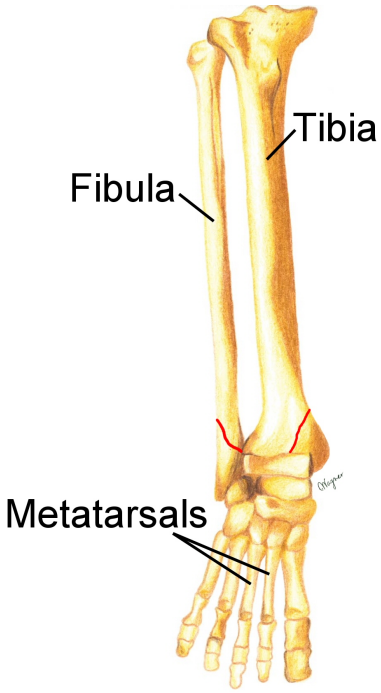
Bimalleolar Fracture, Ankle, Undisplaced (Adult)



You have two *fractures* (break in bone) in the lower bones of your leg that help to make up your ankle. These fractures are in the bone you feel as the bump on the outside of your ankle *(fibula)* and the bone that you feel as the bump on the inside of your ankle *(tibia)*. Your fractures are not displaced. This means the bones are in their normal position and should give a good result if they heal in that position. Sometimes an open reduction and internal fixation with screws or pins may be used if the fracture seems unstable or if the position of the bone fragments (break apart) later is lost. Even with the best of care and perfect results this ankle may be more prone to be arthritic later.

These fractures are easily diagnosed with x-rays.

TREATMENT

A short-leg cast is then applied from your toes to below your knee. This is generally left in place for about five to six weeks, during which time it is followed by your caregiver and x-rays may be taken to make sure the bones stay in place.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- Do not drive a vehicle until your caregiver specifically tells you it is safe to do so.
- When home following surgery, apply ice to the area of injury for 15-20 minutes, four times per day while awake, for 2 days. Put the ice in a plastic bag and place a thin towel between the bag of ice and your cast.
- 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.
- Use crutches as directed. **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 for the rest of your life. Problems often follow even the best of care. Follow the directions of your caregiver.**
- Only take over-the-counter or prescription medicines for pain, discomfort, or fever as directed by your caregiver.

SEEK MEDICAL CARE IF:

- Pain is becoming worse rather than better, or if pain is uncontrolled with medications.
- You have increased swelling, redness or numbness in the foot.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- Your skin or nails below the injury turn blue or gray, or feel cold or numb.
- You develop severe pain under the cast or in your foot.

Follow all instructions given to you by your caregiver, make and keep follow up appointments, and use crutches as directed.

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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