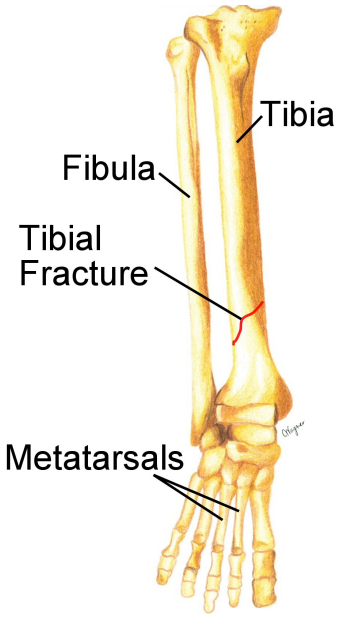
Tibial Fracture (Adult)

You have a *fracture* (break in bone) of your tibia. This is the large "shin" bone in your lower leg. These fractures are easily diagnosed with x-rays.



TREATMENT

You have a simple fracture which usually will heal without disability. It can be treated with simple immobilization. This means the bone can be held with a cast or splint in a favorable position until your caregiver feels it is *stable* (healed well enough). Then you can begin range of motion exercises to keep your knee and ankle *limber* (moving well).

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- Apply ice to the injury for 15 to 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.
- If you have a plaster splint:
  - Wear the splint as directed.
  - You may loosen the elastic around the splint if your toes become numb, tingle, or turn cold or blue.
- 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.
- Only take over-the-counter or prescription medicines for pain, discomfort, or fever as directed by your caregiver.
- See your caregiver as directed. It is very important to keep all follow-up referrals and appointments in order to avoid any long-term problems with your leg and ankle including chronic pain, inability to move the ankle normally, failure of the fracture to heal and permanent disability.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- Pain is becoming worse rather than better, or if pain is uncontrolled with medications.
- You have increased swelling, pain, or redness in the foot.
- You begin to lose feeling in your foot or toes.
- You develop a cold or blue foot or toes on the injured side.
- You develop severe pain in your injured leg, especially if it is increased with movement of your toes.

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