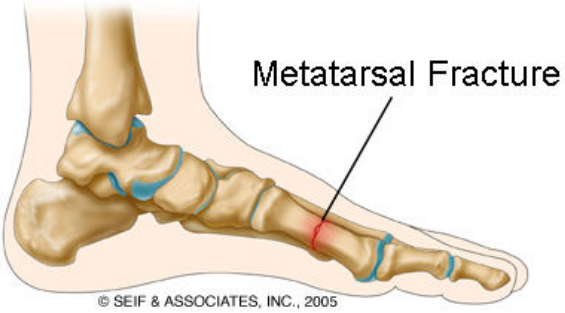
# Metatarsal Fracture(s), Undisplaced

A metatarsal fracture is a break in the bone(s) of the foot. These are the bones of the foot that connect your toes to the bones of the ankle.




## DIAGNOSIS

The diagnoses of these fractures are usually made with X-rays. If there are problems in the forefoot and x-rays are normal a later bone scan will usually make the diagnosis.

## TREATMENT & HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- Treatment may or may not include a cast or walking shoe. When casts are needed the use is usually for short periods of time so as not to slow down healing with muscle wasting *(atrophy*).
- Activities should be stopped until further advised by your caregiver.
- Wear shoes with adequate shock absorbing capabilities and stiff soles.
- Alternative exercise may be undertaken while waiting for healing. These may include bicycling and swimming, or as your caregiver suggests.
- It is important to keep all follow-up visits or specialty referrals. The failure to keep these appointments could result in improper bone healing and chronic pain or disability.
- **Warning**: Do not drive a car or operate a motor vehicle until your caregiver specifically tells you it is safe to do so.

## IF YOU DO NOT HAVE A CAST OR SPLINT:

- You may walk on your injured foot as tolerated or advised.
- Do not put any weight on your injured foot for the first 1-2 weeks or as directed by your caregiver. Slowly increase the amount of time you walk on the foot as the pain allows or as advised.
- Use crutches until you can bear weight without pain. A *gradual increase* in weight bearing may help.
- Apply ice to the injury for 15 to 20 minutes each hour while awake for the first 2 days. Put the ice in a plastic bag and place a towel between the bag of ice and your skin.
- Only take over-the-counter or prescription medicines for pain, discomfort, or fever as directed by your caregiver.

## SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- Your cast gets damaged or breaks.
- You have continued severe pain or more swelling than you did before the cast was put on, or the pain is not controlled with medications.
- Your skin or nails below the injury turn blue or grey, or feel cold or numb.
- There is a bad smell, or new stains and/or pus-like (*purulent*) drainage coming from under the cast.

## 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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