

A lesser toe fracture (any toe apart from your big toe)

Introduction

This leaflet is for people who have broken a bone in one of their toes but not the big toe. If you have broken your big toe, this leaflet is not for you.

These tiny toe bones heal well, but will usually be:

- extremely painful
- swollen
- red or bruised
- difficult to walk on

Caring for a broken toe

- Keep your foot raised, ideally above the level of your heart, whenever you can during the first few days. You can do this by resting your foot on cushions. This will help to reduce any swelling and pain.
- Hold an ice pack (try frozen peas wrapped in a towel) to the toe for 15 to 20 minutes every few hours for the first couple of days. Do not apply ice directly to your skin.
- Avoid walking or standing for too long until the pain settles and bruising fades.
- Take over-the-counter pain relief such as paracetamol or ibuprofen.
- Wear supportive shoes with a stiff sole to protect and support your foot.

To keep your toe in the correct position and to help reduce any discomfort, strapping may have been applied.

The strapping can usually be removed within 3 weeks of the injury but full healing will often take 6 weeks. You may continue to have some discomfort during this time.

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Department

Emergency /
Trauma Services

Review due

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Patient Information

Occasionally the bone will fail to heal (smoking is a risk factor) and continue to be painful even after several months.

It is not usually necessary for you to be seen for further assessment. However, please contact the Trauma Service or NHS 111 if you are experiencing longer lasting pain. The contact details are at the end of this leaflet.

All X-rays taken are reviewed by a specialist doctor and occasionally it may be necessary for us to contact you.

Contact information

If you have any worries or concerns following your discharge from hospital, please contact:

Trauma Service

Tel: 0300 422 5269

Monday to Friday, 10:00am to 2:00pm

Email: ghn-tr.glostrauma@nhs.net

NHS 111

Tel: 111

Physiotherapy

Visit the website below for information about managing pain and how you can refer yourself to see a physiotherapist.

www.gloshospitals.nhs.uk/our-services/services-we-offer/physiotherapy/

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Making a choice

Shared Decision Making

If you are asked to make a choice, you may have lots of questions that you want to ask. You may also want to talk over your options with your family or friends. It can help to write a list of the questions you want answered and take it to your appointment.



Ask 3 Questions

To begin with, try to make sure you get the answers to three key questions if you are asked to make a choice about your healthcare.

1. What are my options?
2. What are the pros and cons of each option for me?
3. How do I get support to help me make a decision that is right for me?

These resources have been adapted with kind permission from the MAGIC Programme, supported by the Health Foundation

* Ask 3 Questions is based on Shepherd HL, et al. Three questions that patients can ask to improve the quality of information physicians give about treatment options: A cross-over trial. Patient Education and Counselling, 2011;84: 379-85



<https://aqua.nhs.uk/resources/shared-decision-making-case-studies/>