



**Nottingham
Orthopaedics**

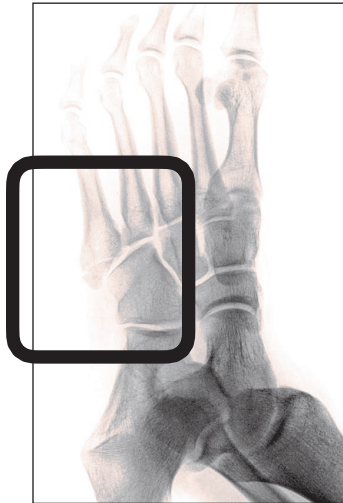


**Nottingham
University Hospitals**
NHS Trust

Fifth Metatarsal Fracture

Information for patients

Fracture Clinic



This document can be provided in different languages and formats. For more information please contact:

Fracture Clinic
QMC
Derby Road, Nottingham
Tel: 0115 924 9924 ext 61260



Your diagnosis

You have an injury called a fractured fifth metatarsal. This is a bone on the outside of your foot. A fracture is the same as a “broken bone”. It will be painful and swollen whilst the fracture heals.

Treatment

These injuries usually heal by themselves. You will struggle to put weight on your foot at first – this is normal and is your body’s way of protecting the injury. Your foot and sometimes the outside of your ankle will be bruised and swollen. You should take simple painkillers as required. As your pain settles you should start putting weight on your foot. You will be able to put more and more weight on the foot as your symptoms allow.

A “walking boot” may allow you to start putting some weight on your foot sooner. Use it if you find it helps you walk **but there is no need to use it if you don’t find it helpful**. You don’t need to sleep in it and should stop using it as soon as your symptoms allow. It should not be used for any longer than six weeks. Crutches also may help you get about more easily. These can be discarded as soon as you feel able to walk without them. You can return the crutches to the physiotherapy department but the boot is single use.

Recovery

It may take a long time to fully recover from your injury. Most people can walk reasonably comfortably by six weeks. The full recovery will take much longer and many people will still have some aches after several months. Most people’s symptoms will progressively improve. Bruising usually resolves after a few weeks. Many patients’ feet are swollen, particularly at the end of the day, for several months. Very rarely these fractures don’t fully heal and if this occurs sometimes this can benefit from surgery. You will be able to tell this is happening if your symptoms haven’t settled down as described above.

Rehabilitation

You can drive when you are safe to control a car. You can work if your symptoms don't stop you from doing your job. You may need a sick note depending on what your job involves.

You can resume your normal sporting activities when your symptoms allow. Most patients would not be able to run or take part in sports for at least six weeks. Most people would need to then spend a further six weeks gradually building back up to their normal sporting activities.

If you are concerned about your recovery or symptoms you can return to the adult fracture clinic to see a surgeon or physiotherapist to discuss your recovery. Most patients do not need formal physiotherapy.

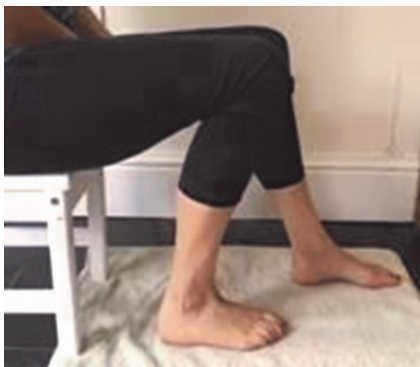
Elevating your foot & ankle will help reduce pain and swelling. If possible, you should lay almost flat and your affected leg elevated on two pillows so that it is higher than your chest. Ice may also help with swelling. Apply ice wrapped in a damp towel for **15–20 minutes** every 2–3 hours during the day. **Ice should not be left on during sleep.**

Exercises

1. Ankle movements while sitting down

Lift your injured foot off the floor and move your foot and ankle up and down. Then move your foot around drawing an imaginary circle with your big toe.

Put your foot on the floor and slide it backwards as if to put it under your seat, keeping the heel down on the floor.



2. Seated heel raises

Sit with your foot flat on the ground and keeping your toes on the floor raise your heel up and off the floor and then back down.

When you are able to stand safely at your kitchen counter and pain allows, you can progress to standing heel raises.

3. Standing heel raises

Put your hands or elbows on the worktop and lean forward to take some weight through your arms. In this position start repeated heels raises.



Start with 3 sets of 10. Once not too uncomfortable, start taking more and more weight through your affected side and less and less through your arms.

Once 3 sets of 10 becomes comfortable, do more until fatigued.

Exercise videos

If you have access to the internet through your smartphone or computer you can access our online advice videos for exercises. Scan the QR codes below to access this content.

Early Exercises	Intermediate Exercises	Standing Exercises
Click here or scan code	Click here or scan code	Click here or scan code
		

Key points

1. If you feel you are failing to make satisfactory progress with your symptoms you should return to the physiotherapy department using your open appointment.
2. Take regular pain relief as required. Usually over the counter medications are sufficient.
3. Your symptoms should progressively improve with time. Most of the recovery occurs in the first six weeks. The final improvement often takes a lot longer.

Contact us

Physiotherapy

You will have an open appointment in the physiotherapy department. If you feel you are not making appropriate progress with your **movements** or **pain** then please get in contact for a face to face appointment:

If you need to get in touch please call **0115 849 3312** between 8am and 4pm, Monday to Friday.

Fracture Clinic

If there is another problem with your progress following your injury you can book in for a face to face appointment with the fracture clinic to see a doctor:

If you need to get in touch please call **0115 924 9924 ext: 61260** between 8am and 5pm, Monday to Friday.



Notes

Feedback

We appreciate and encourage feedback. If you need advice or are concerned about any aspect of care or treatment please speak to a member of staff or contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS):

Freephone: 0800 183 0204

From abroad: +44 115 924 9924 ext 65412 or 62301

Deaf and hard of hearing: text 07812 270003

E-mail: pals@nuh.nhs.uk

Letter: NUH NHS Trust, c/o PALS, Freepost NEA 14614, Nottingham NG7 1BR

www.nuh.nhs.uk



You can also scan the QR code to leave patient, family or carer feedback. After scanning the QR code please go to 'How can I leave my feedback' and select the service that you have accessed and then follow the on screen prompts.

If you require a full list of references for this leaflet please email
patientinformation@nuh.nhs.uk or phone 0115 924 9924
ext. 67184.

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