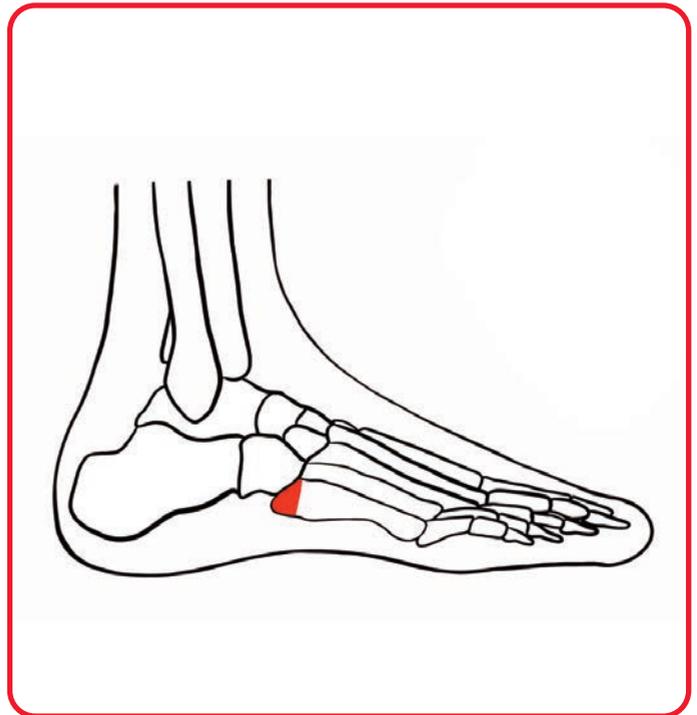


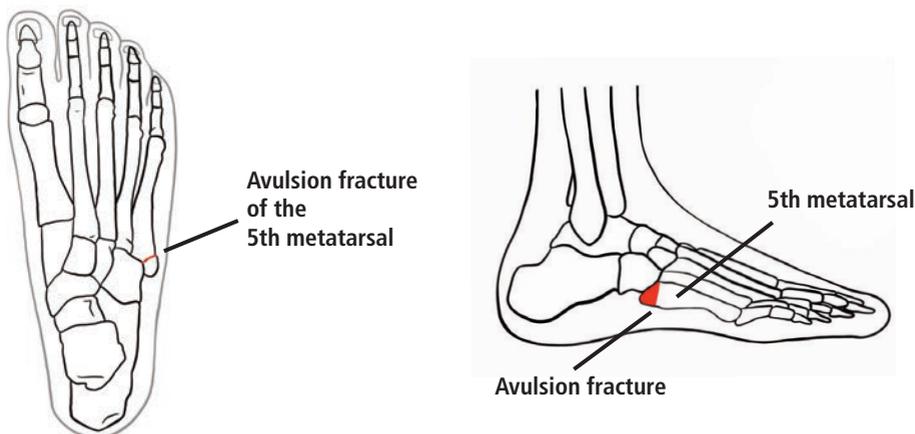
# Base of 5th metatarsal fracture

Virtual Fracture Clinic



## Who is this leaflet for?

You have sustained a fracture at the base of the 5th metatarsal. This leaflet explains how to properly care for your injury through the next six weeks of rehabilitation. It provides information on what to expect and aims to answer common questions you may have.



## What is the Virtual Fracture Clinic?

The Virtual Fracture clinic is where an orthopaedic surgeon and a trained nurse or physiotherapist will review your notes and X-rays. After this has happened, you will receive a letter confirming that the consultant is happy with the treatment plan. A decision will be made if a face to face clinic appointment is needed depending on your specific fracture. During the COVID-19 crisis you may be discharged directly from the Minor Injury Unit or ED.

**Healing:** it normally takes 6-12 weeks for this fracture to heal.

**Pain and swelling:** the swelling is often worse at the end of the day and elevating your foot will help.

Take painkillers as prescribed.

Mild pain and swelling can take up to 12 months to completely resolve.

**Walking:** you may walk on the foot fully weight bearing as comfort allows but you may find it easier to walk on your heel in the early stages. You may have been given a walker boot or you may have been advised that your own footwear is adequate with crutches.

## **Weeks since injury**

## **Rehabilitation plan**

0-3

Wear the boot when you are walking.

It is OK to take the boot off at night when resting at home.

Use the crutches to take some weight off your foot.

Start your exercises straight away to maintain and improve your movement.

3-6

Wean off the crutches or boot if you have one.

Start walking around your house first, then try outside.

You may want to use the boot if you go on a longer walk or need to walk over uneven ground.

Continue your exercises to regain flexibility in your foot.

6-12

Begin to resume normal, day-to-day activities, using any pain you experience as a guide.

Heavy tasks or long walks may still cause some discomfort and swelling.

12+

Your fracture is typically healed at this stage, although you may experience mild symptoms for up to 12 months after the injury. If your symptoms are gradually improving this is not cause for concern.

If you require a face to face appointment within the first 6 months, please call 01736 758892.

## What to expect

### Caring for your fracture

**Cold packs:** a cold pack (ice pack or frozen peas wrapped in a damp towel) can provide short term pain relief. Apply this to the sore area for up to 15 minutes, every few hours ensuring the ice is never in direct contact with the skin.

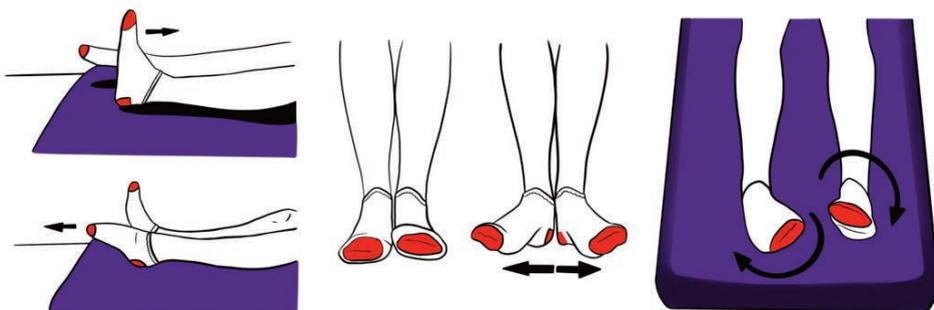
**Rest and elevation:** to minimise swelling, try to rest and elevate your foot as much as possible for the first two weeks after the injury. You can use pillows or a stool to keep the foot elevated.

**Early movement and exercise:** early movement of the ankle and foot is important to promote circulation and reduce the risk of developing a DVT (blood clot). Follow the exercises below without causing too much pain. This will ensure that your ankle and foot do not become too stiff. Early weight bearing (putting weight on the injured foot) helps increase the speed of healing. Walk on your foot as normally as possible as this will aid recovery.

### Exercises

**Ankle and foot movement exercises. Repeat these ten times each, to be completed 3-4 times a day.**

1. Point your foot up and down within a comfortable range of movement.
2. With your heels together, move your toes apart, as shown in the picture.
3. Make circles with your foot in one direction and then change direction.



## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What shall I wear on my uninjured foot?**

A supportive shoe or trainer with a firm sole is recommended for your uninjured foot. You will notice that the boot you have been given has a thicker sole. By matching this height on the other side you will reduce any stress on your other joints.

### **What if I have diabetes?**

If you are diabetic, please contact us to discuss your boot. We can provide you with a specialist boot if required.

### **When can I resume driving?**

Do not drive whilst wearing the boot or while your foot remains painful. If you have any particular questions please contact us on the number below.

### **Does smoking affect the healing process?**

Medical evidence suggests that smoking prolongs fracture healing time. In extreme cases it can stop healing altogether. It is important to consider this information with relation to your injury. Stopping smoking during the healing phase of your fracture will help ensure optimal recovery from this injury. For more information, refer to [www.smokefree.nhs.uk](http://www.smokefree.nhs.uk) or discuss with your GP.

### **Will I need any follow up?**

We do not routinely follow up patients with this type of injury. You will be given an open appointment for 6 months.

### **Contact us**

If you have any questions please contact our hotline: 01872 253170.  
Calls are monitored Monday to Friday 9am – 4pm.

If you or your child have any disability that needs a different method of support from us, please do not hesitate to contact us on the number above. We will do our best to accommodate your needs.

If you would like this leaflet in large print, braille, audio version or in another language, please contact the General Office on 01872 252690

