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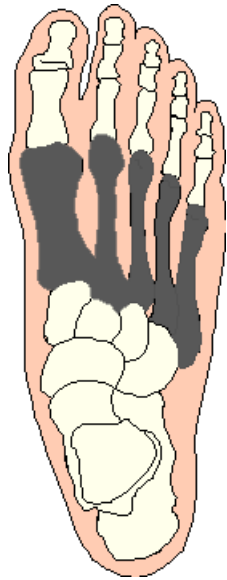


Metatarsal fractures

Information for children, parents and carers



**Emergency Department
Royal Aberdeen Children's Hospital**



**Bones of the foot
(metatarsals shaded)**



**A “moon boot”
(only some children
need one of these)**

What is a metatarsal fracture?

This is an injury to the long bones in the foot which sit between the ankle and the toes.

There are different types of metatarsal injury. In your child's case, the fracture is subtle and considered stable. It is therefore at very low risk of any problem or complication.

An injury like this one usually heals well with the treatment described below but no follow-up is required. This type of injury does not result in long term problems.

How is it treated?

Wearing supportive footwear

No special treatments or splints are usually needed. Often, these injuries are managed simply by wearing good supportive and sturdy footwear. A stiff-soled shoe or boot is best. How long your child needs to wear this type of footwear depends on the type of injury but can be from 2 to 6 weeks.

If we've advised you to use supportive footwear, it is important to **remember to use this at all times when weightbearing through the foot**. This includes even when you wouldn't normally wear supportive shoes (such as when your child is at home and they'd usually wear slippers etc).

If your child needs extra support

We offer some children a “moon boot” for additional support during this period. Again, your child must wear this at all times.

You can remove the boot when your child is showering and bathing, but please be careful not to upset the injury when out their foot of the boot.

Pain relief

You can give your child regular simple pain relief such as paracetamol or ibuprofen, always following the instructions on the bottle or packet.

Returning to normal

After 4 to 6 weeks and after their pain has settled, your child can wear their normal footwear again and gradually return to playing sport.

What should we expect?

- Your child should avoid rough play and sport for the time they are in the supportive shoes or moon boot. It is also important they are careful at school especially at break times.
- It is common for children to have some discomfort to occur as their foot begins to move unsupported. Simple pain relief should allow increased use and manage this discomfort.
- Some discomfort may last for up to 2 weeks after the splintage (this is the supportive footwear or moon boot) comes off, but it should be **gradually improving**.

Will they need physiotherapy?

Once the supportive shoes or boot comes off, encourage your child to move their foot and ankle as much they are able.

Gradually and slowly reintroduce activities such as long distance walking or running on hard surfaces.

After this type of injury, children don't usually need physiotherapy.

When can they return to sports?

Non-contact sports such as swimming and running can be started once the splint comes off.

Your child should avoid contact sports such as rugby, football or basketball for 2 weeks after the splintage comes off. They can return to playing these sports **gradually** after this time.

Contact telephone number

If you have any concerns or if your child still has significant pain after 4 weeks, please contact us on the number below. We'll then arrange an appointment to review their progress.

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Aberdeen
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 01224 552041

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