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# Broken Toe(s) or Broken Metatarsal

## What are the symptoms of a broken toe(s) or a broken metatarsal?

- Toe or Foot Swelling
- Bruising
- Pain with Weight Bearing, Usually less pain while resting
- Deformity of the toe after trauma

## What are the causes of a broken toe(s)

Trauma is the usual cause of a broken toe. Heavy objects falling directly onto the toe can cause a broken or fractured toe. The direct impact of a toe into a table leg, chair leg, door frame or heavy object can also cause a fracture of the toe.

## What are the causes of a broken metatarsal

Metatarsals are the long bones in the foot. Trauma or repetitive stress can cause a metatarsal fracture. Heavy objects falling directly onto the foot can cause a metatarsal fracture. Repetitive stress to the foot with new activities such as walking or running can cause a metatarsal to fracture. This is called a metatarsal stress fracture. Low vitamin D levels can also be a cause of metatarsal stress fractures.

## How do you diagnose a broken toe(s) or a broken metatarsal?

X-Ray is the primary modality to diagnosis a broken toe or a metatarsal fracture. In some instances, MRI may be necessary to diagnose a metatarsal stress fracture.



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## Treatment for a broken or fractured toe(s)

In the majority of cases, broken toe bones are treated without the need for surgery. A hard sole shoe or boot may be used for comfort and protection initially for a broken toe. Ice and elevation are typically recommended to help with pain associated with a broken toe. Over the counter pain medications such as Tylenol or ibuprofen are typically adequate to control pain relative to a broken toe. Buddy taping the broken toe to the adjacent toe for comfort and stability is often recommended.

In instances of significant displacement or angulation of the toe fracture, surgery may be recommended to allow for appropriate alignment and function of the toe. In instances of significant disruption of the joint surface associated with the toe fracture, surgery may be recommended in an effort to help realign the joint surface to help the long-term function of the toe and prevent arthritis. Overall the instance of surgery for a broken toe is very low.

## Treatment for a broken or fractured metatarsal

In the majority of cases, metatarsal fractures are treated without the need for surgery. A hard sole shoe or boot may be used for comfort and protection initially for a broken metatarsal. Ice and elevation are typically recommended to help with pain associated with a broken metatarsal. Over the counter pain medications such as Tylenol or ibuprofen are typically adequate to control pain relative to a broken metatarsal.

In instances of significant displacement or angulation of the metatarsal fracture, surgery may be recommended to allow for appropriate alignment and function of the foot. In instances of significant disruption of the joint surface associated with the metatarsal fracture, surgery may be recommended in an effort to help realign the joint surface to help the long-term function of the foot and prevent arthritis. Overall the instance of surgery for a broken metatarsal is very low.



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Fifth metatarsal stress fractures can sometimes be a little more precarious in their healing and therefore the threshold for treating some types of fifth metatarsal fractures can be lower.

## RECOVERY

Bones typically take six weeks to heal. Some metatarsal fractures may be slower to heal than others. Swelling may persist in the foot or the toes after a toe or metatarsal fracture for some time even after the pain has resolved and this is a normal finding.

## AMERICAN ORTHOPAEDIC FOOT & ANKLE SOCIETY

All of the foot and ankle surgeons in the practice are recognized members of the American Orthopaedic Foot & Ankle Society. It is the oldest and most prestigious medical society dedicated to the foot and ankle. The mission of the society is to advance science and practice of foot and ankle surgery through education, research, and advocacy on behalf of patients and practitioners. These physicians dedicate their time and energy to improving the patient experience and their knowledge in their field. For more information visit <http://www.aofas.org>.

## MD West ONE Foot & Ankle Specialists:

The Foot & Ankle Specialists are all Board Certified and Fellowship-Trained, meaning they've focused their education, training, and research on orthopedic surgery of the foot and ankle.

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