

## ***Broken bones/Fractures***

Nearly one-fourth of all the bones in your body are in your feet. A broken (fractured) bone in your forefoot or in one of your toes is often painful but rarely disabling. Most of the time, these injuries heal without operative treatment. Types of fractures include stress fractures and general bone fractures.

Stress fractures frequently occur in the bones of the forefoot extending from your toes to the middle of your foot. Stress fractures are like tiny cracks in the bone surface. They can occur with sudden increases in training (such as running or walking for longer distances or times), improper training techniques or changes in training surfaces.



Most other types of fractures extend through the bone. They may be stable, in which there is no shift in bone alignment, or displaced, in which the bone ends no longer line up properly. These fractures usually result from trauma, such as dropping a heavy object on your foot, or from a twisting injury. If the fractured bone does not break through the skin, it is called a closed fracture. Several types of fractures occur to the forefoot bone on the side of the little toe (fifth metatarsal).

An ankle-twisting injury may tear the tendon that attaches to this bone and pull a small piece of the bone away. There are five metatarsal bones in your foot. The 5<sup>th</sup> metatarsal is the outer bone that connects to your little toe. It is the most commonly fractured metatarsal bone.

A break in the part of your 5<sup>th</sup> metatarsal bone closest to the foot is called a Jones fracture. This area of the bone has low blood flow. This makes healing difficult.

An avulsion fracture occurs when a tendon pulls a piece of bone away from the rest of the bone. An avulsion fracture on the 5<sup>th</sup> metatarsal bone is called a “dancer’s fracture.”

You can decrease swelling by

- Resting and not putting weight on your foot
- Elevating your foot

Make an ice pack by putting ice in a zip lock plastic bag and wrapping a cloth around it.

- Do not put the bag of ice directly on your skin. It could damage your skin.
- Ice your foot for about 20 minutes every hour while awake for the first 48 hrs, then 2 - 3 times a day.

For pain, you can use ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin, and others) or naproxen (Aleve, Naprosyn, and others).

- Do not use these medications for the first 24 hours after your injury. They may increase the risk of bleeding.
- Talk with Dr. Williams before using these medicines if you have heart disease, high blood pressure, kidney disease, liver disease, or have had stomach ulcers or internal bleeding in the past.
- Do not take more than the amount recommended on the bottle or more than Dr. Williams tells you to take.