

# Fractures (broken bones)

## What is it?

A broken bone.

## Symptoms:

- Intense pain
- Limited mobility or inability to move a limb or put weight on it
- Swelling, bruising, or bleeding
- A visibly out-of-place or misshapen limb or joint
- Numbness or tingling
- Broken skin with bone protruding

## Plan of Action:

**Don't move the person except if necessary to avoid further injury.**

- **Stop any bleeding.** Apply pressure to the wound with a sterile bandage, a clean cloth or a clean piece of clothing.
- **Immobilize the injured area.** Don't try to realign the bone or push a bone that's sticking out back in. If you've been trained in how to splint and professional help isn't readily available, apply a splint to the area above and below the fracture sites. Padding the splints can help reduce discomfort.
- **Apply ice packs to limit swelling and help relieve pain.** Don't apply ice directly to the skin. Wrap the ice in a towel, piece of cloth or some other

material.

- **Treat for shock.** If the person feels faint or is breathing in short, rapid breaths, lay the person down with the head slightly lower than the trunk and, if possible, elevate the legs.

**If the broken bone is the result of major trauma or injury, call 911 or your local emergency number.**

**Also call for emergency help if:**

- The person is unresponsive, isn't breathing or isn't moving. Begin CPR if there's no breathing or heartbeat.
- There is heavy bleeding.
- Even gentle pressure or movement causes pain.
- The limb or joint appears deformed.
- The bone has pierced the skin.
- The extremity of the injured arm or leg, such as a toe or finger, is numb or bluish at the tip.
- You suspect a bone is broken in the neck, head, or back.

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