

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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