Discharge advice for a 5th metatarsal base (foot) fracture

Issued by the Orthopaedic Department
You have broken a bone on the outer part of your foot – this is known as a 5th metatarsal base fracture. This kind of break usually heals well without problems.

**What will happen after I leave hospital?**

An orthopaedic consultant will review your x-rays tomorrow. You will get a telephone call following this (from a withheld number) to confirm your treatment and if further imaging, such as x-rays are needed.

- The pain, tenderness and swelling you are experiencing in your foot should settle over a period of a few weeks
- It is important to elevate your foot above waist level as much as possible over the first three weeks. This will help reduce the pain and swelling. Sit or lie down with your foot supported by some pillows
- We suggest you take paracetamol and ibuprofen to help relieve your pain, if you can take them. If you need further advice about pain relief, ask your pharmacist

If you have not received a telephone call from us within 24 hours please call the helpline number. These numbers are listed on the following page.

**Can I walk around while my foot is healing?**

- During this time, you may find walking on the foot painful. It may help to walk on your heel initially
- You will be provided with a support for your foot in the form of a removable boot. If needed, you will also be provided with crutches
- You may walk on the foot as much as you are able to. The boot should be gradually discarded over 3-5 weeks as the pain settles
How long will it take to heal?

- Most injuries heal without any problems - however it may take several months for your symptoms to settle completely
- Sometimes, the break may fail to heal and continue to be painful, even after several months. If this occurs an operation may be needed to help heal the break
- If you are still experiencing a lot of pain after two months, please phone the helpline for further advice

If you have any worries or concerns, please contact us on the helpline:

**Monday-Friday, 9am-4pm** 01670 529431

**After hours and weekends, if you need urgent advice contact:**

- **Wansbeck General Hospital** 01670 529884
- **North Tyneside Hospital** 0191 2932515
- **Northumbria Specialist Emergency Care Hospital** 0191 6072100
Alternative Formats
If you would like a copy of this information in large print, another language, audio tape or other format please call the Contact Centre on 03 44 811 8118

Other sources of information

NHS 111

NHS Choices
www.nhs.uk/pages/homepage.aspx

NICE (National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence)
www.nice.org.uk

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)
Freephone: 0800 032 0202
Text: 01670 511098
Email: northoftynepals@nhct.nhs.uk

Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
General Enquiries 03 44 811 8111
www.northumbria.nhs.uk

PIN 672/V2

Review date: June 2018

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