

**Trauma and Orthopaedics**

# **Metatarsal Fracture – single (Diabetic)**

# This is a fracture to one of the bones in the front of your foot.

# **Healing:**

# It can take up to 6-12 weeks for these fractures to heal.

# Smoking will slow down your healing. We would advise that you stop smoking while your fracture heals. Talk to your GP or go to www.smokefree.nhs.uk for more information.

# **Pain and swelling:**

# You may have foot pain and swelling for 3-6 months after your injury. Swelling is often worse at the end of the day.

# Taking pain medication, elevating your foot and using ice or cold packs will help. More information is on the next page.

 

# **Walking and your boot:**

Because you are diabetic we recommend that you wear an Air Cast Boot – if you do not have this please contact the VFC and we can arrange for you to be fitted with one. The boot protects your foot and will make you more comfortable. You should wear the boot when you are standing and walking but you can take it off at night and at rest. You need to wear the boot for 6 weeks after your injury. You must check your foot and ankle daily to ensure the skin remains intact. Please inform us if you have any ulcers or wounds on your foot as you may require a specialist boot.

You are allowed to put weight through your foot. You may find it easier to use crutches in the early stages.

# **Exercises:**

It is important to start exercises as soon as possible. Instructions follow.

# **Follow up:**

# You will have a follow up appointment 6 weeks after your injury and you will receive this appointment in the post. If you have not received this appointment please contact Fracture Clinic Reception team on 01582 497194.

# **Any questions:**

# If you are concerned about your symptoms, are unable to follow this rehabilitation plan or have pain other than at the site of your injury please contact the Virtual Fracture Clinic team.

# **Caring for your injury – Weeks 1 - 6**

**Remember to wear your boot whenever standing and walking.** You can remove the boot when resting, at night and to wash and dress. Wear a long sock in your boot.

**Using a cold pack will help with your pain and swelling.** You can use an ice pack or bag of frozen peas wrapped in a damp towel. Put this on your ankle for up to 15 minutes every few hours. Make sure the ice isn’t in direct contact with your skin.

**Try to rest your ankle**, especially in the first 24-72 hours. Raise your ankle on a stool or cushions so that it is above the level of your hip. This will help to reduce your swelling.

**Exercises:**Early exercise is important to recover movement and promote circulation. This will reduce the risk of developing a Deep Vein Thrombosis (blood clot). If you notice any swelling or redness in the calf, please attend A&E.

Do these exercises 3-4 times a day. Start straight away, you do not need to push into pain.

**Ankle Exercises**



Point your foot up and down. Repeat this 10 times.

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With your heels together, move your toes apart to turn the foot outwards.

Repeat this 10 times. Do this movement gently within comfort.



Make gentle circles with your foot in one direction and then the other direction.

Repeat this 10 times**.**

# **Caring for your injury – Weeks 6 - 12**

# **It is now 6 weeks since your injury and you can start to wean out of you boot.** Stop using it around your own home first and continue wearing it for longer distances. You should aim to be walking without out of your boot by 8 weeks after your injury.

# It is normal to still have mild discomfort and swelling. This may continue for 3-6 months.

# **You will attend your Fracture Clinic Appointment at 6 weeks after your injury.**

# **Activity and Exercise**

# Keep doing your exercises until you have full movement in your foot.

# Gradually increase your level of activity. You should avoid impact activity for 3 months. This includes running and jumping.

# **Frequently Asked Questions**

**I am struggling with my boot. What do I do?**

The boot has a thicker sole; this can make you feel uneven. Make sure you wear a supportive shoe or trainer on your uninjured foot. This will reduce stress on other joints.

If you need more advice contact the Virtual Fracture Clinic.

**I am diabetic, does this change things?**

You must check your foot and ankle daily to ensure the skin remains intact. Please inform us if you have any ulcers or wounds on your foot as you may require a specialist boot.

**When can I start driving?**

You can return to driving when:

* You are no longer using your brace,
* You can walk comfortably
* You can perform an emergency stop pain free.

Always test your ability to drive in a safe environment first.

**How can I get a certificate for work?**

You can get a fitness for work statement from your GP or the doctor at your Fracture Clinic appointment.

**What do I do with my boot and crutches when I no longer need them?**

We are not able to use boots again. These should not be returned to the hospital.

Crutches can be returned to the Fracture Clinic or A&E.

**How do I contact the Virtual Fracture Clinic?**

Call 01582 718121. Messages will be checked every morning Monday-Friday.

Email VFC@ldh.nhs.uk

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