



Information for
patients and
carers

Ankle fracture

(Weber A type)

What is my injury?

A Weber A Ankle Fracture refers to a broken bone (fibula) in your ankle.

How common are ankle fractures?

A Weber A Ankle Fracture is a common injury which usually occurs when you “go over” on your ankle. This stretches the ligaments on the outside of the ankle joint and pulls off a fragment of bone.

What symptoms do ankle fractures cause?

Symptoms commonly include pain, swelling, bruising and initially difficulty weight bearing. The pain experienced can be severe.

How should I be looking after my ankle?

The initial treatment after this type of injury aims to settle the pain and swelling by resting, applying ice packs, taking regular painkillers and elevating the ankle.

It is important to remember that early weight bearing aids a quicker recovery. It is also important to keep the ankle moving to prevent stiffness.

If you smoke, you are advised to stop as smoking can slow down bone healing.

What do I do if I have been provided with a “boot” to wear?

Sometimes A&E and minor injuries departments will give a “walker boot” to people with ankle fractures. This may initially help with the pain, but it is important to not become reliant on the boot as it will make the ankle weaker and stiffer in the longer term.

The boot should be removed at regular intervals and discarded as soon as it is no longer helping. Keep yourself hydrated and mobile as reduced mobility from ankle fractures can increase the risk of a blood clot in the leg or chest. Symptoms such as leg pain or swelling, shortness of breath, coughing up blood, chest pain or feeling faint require you to attend A&E urgently.

Do I need physiotherapy?

Most patients benefit from physiotherapy advice to work on range of movement exercises and to build up strength and proprioception (knowing where your ankle is positioned without having to look at it). In addition to recovery after a fracture, these exercises also help to minimise recurrent injuries occurring. It is important you do these exercises that have been advised. You have been referred to physiotherapy for their expert input.

How quickly will things improve?

The vast majority of these injuries will settle and the bone heals within 6-8 weeks. Occasionally some people have ongoing problems, these can include ongoing pain particularly if the fracture has not healed.

It is important that if you are have ongoing problems you contact us as you may require further investigations.

Do I need further x-rays?

The overwhelming number of these fractures heal without problem. Sometimes the healing is not with bone but with fibrous tissue (scar tissue). This means that on an x-ray, it may look like the fracture line is still present but it has actually healed with fibrous tissue that isn't visible on x-ray. For this reason, x-rays are usually unhelpful in the long-term management of these injuries.

When can I get back to normal activities?

In terms of return to sport, we would generally recommend you are pain free before undertaking vigorous physical activity. This is usually 6 – 8 weeks but can be longer.

Return to work should be guided by your symptom level and what your job involves, for example, manual workers may need more time off work than administration workers due to the nature of their work.

In terms of driving, it is your responsibility to ensure you are fit to drive and are able to fully control your car before you return to driving. The DVLA website has further information regards this.

Contact details

Should you require further advice or information please contact the Fracture clinic on: 01772 522878

Sources of further information

www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk

www.nhs.uk

www.accessable.co.uk

www.patient.co.uk

All our patient information leaflets are available on our website for patients to access and download:

www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk/patient-information-leaflets

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If you want to stop smoking, you can also contact the Quit Squad Freephone 0800 328 6297.

Please ask if you would like help in understanding this information. This information can be made available in large print and in other languages.

Gujarati:

આ માહિતીને સમજવામાં સહાયતા જોઈતી હોય તો કૃપા કરીને પૂછો. આ માહિતી મોટા છપાણામાં અને અન્ય ભાષામાં ઉપલબ્ધ કરી શકાય છે.

Romanian:

Vă rugăm să întrebați dacă aveți nevoie de ajutor pentru înțelegerea acestor informații. Aceste informații pot fi puse la dispoziție în format mare și în alte limbi.”

Polish:

Poinformuj nas, jeśli potrzebna jest ci pomoc w zrozumieniu tych informacji. Informacje te można również udostępnić dużym drukiem oraz w innych językach

Punjabi:

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਸਮਝਣ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਮਦਦ ਲੈਣੀ ਚਾਹੋਗੇ ਤਾਂ ਕਰਿਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਇਸ ਬਾਰੇ ਪੁੱਛੋ। ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਵੱਡੇ ਪ੍ਰਿੰਟ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰਨਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਮੁਹੱਈਆ ਕੀਤੀ ਜਾ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੈ।

Urdu:

دوسری زبانوں اور ریڑی اگر آپ کو ہی معلومات سمجھنے کے لئے مدد کی ضرورت ہے تو
یہی چھپا میں یہ ابی دست ہو یسکت ہے براے مہر یبان پوے چھدی۔ معلومات

Arabic:

مطبوعه بأحرف كبيرة وبلغات إذا كنت تريد مساعدة في فهم هذه المعلومات يُرجى أن تطلب
أخرى يمكن تو فير هذه المعلومات

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Division: Surgery

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