

5th metatarsal fracture

This leaflet offers more information about your 5th metatarsal fracture. If you have any further questions or concerns, please speak to the staff member in charge of your care.

What is a 5th metatarsal fracture and why have I got one?

You have fractured (broken) a bone in your foot called the 5th metatarsal.

The metatarsals are five bones linking your toes to your ankle - the 5th is the one nearest the outside of your foot and the most common to fracture after a sudden injury.



The fracture is normally caused by a twisting injury. If you have any thinning of the bone (osteoporosis) the fracture may be more likely to happen.

What are the signs and symptoms?

Your foot may be painful, bruised, stiff and swollen, and you may have problems walking. The symptoms should slowly get better over about three to six weeks.

Do I need any tests to confirm the diagnosis?

Sometimes an X-ray may be needed to confirm the diagnosis and guide your treatment.

What treatments are available?

You will probably need support from bandages or a rigid shoe or boot.

You will also be provided with crutches if needed.

Surgery may be needed if:

- your fracture is very complex
- the bones have slipped too far from where they should be (significantly displaced fracture)
- the skin over the fracture has broken (open fracture).

What happens if I do not get treatment?

The fracture may not heal and you may still be in pain months later. Surgery may then be needed.

Is there anything I can do to help myself?

You may walk on your foot as much as your pain lets you.

If you have been given a boot to help, you should start using this less and less over three to five weeks.

If it hurts too much to walk on your foot, try walking on your heel at first to see if this helps.

Most fractures heal without any problems, but it may be a few months before your symptoms get completely better.

Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns about your 5th metatarsal fracture, please discuss them with your surgeon or nurse practitioner at your clinic appointment, or contact the fracture clinic on 020 8672 1255 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm).

For more information leaflets on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit www.stgeorges.nhs.uk

Additional services

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS can offer you on-the-spot advice and information when you have comments or concerns about our services or the care you have received. You can visit the PALS office between 9am and 5pm, Monday to Friday in the main corridor between Grosvenor and Lanesborough Wing (near the lift foyer).

Tel: 020 8725 2453 **Email:** pals@stgeorges.nhs.uk

NHS Choices

NHS Choices provides online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you make decisions about your health.

Web: www.nhs.uk

NHS 111

You can call 111 when you need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency. NHS 111 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Calls are free from landlines and mobile phones.

Tel: 111

