

# Bone fracture

Also called: broken bone

A complete or partial break in a bone.

## Very common

More than 3 million US cases per year

-  Requires a medical diagnosis
-  Lab tests or imaging often required
-  Treatable by a medical professional
-  Short-term: resolves within days to weeks

Causes of bone fractures include trauma, overuse, and diseases that weaken bones.

The main symptom is pain. There may also be loss of functionality depending on the area affected.

Treatment often involves resetting the bone in place and immobilizing it in a cast or splint to allow it time to heal. Sometimes, surgery or metal rods may be needed to reset the bone.

## Ages affected



## Symptoms

### Requires a medical diagnosis

The main symptom is pain. There may also be loss of functionality depending on the area affected.

### People may experience:

**Pain areas:** in the bones

**Also common:** bleeding, bruising, limping, loss of height, physical deformity, swelling, or tenderness

## Treatments

### Treatment depends on severity

Treatment often involves resetting the bone in place and immobilizing it in a cast or splint to allow it time to heal. Sometimes, surgery or metal rods may be needed to reset the bone.

### Medical procedure

**Reduction:** Surgery to fix a broken or dislocated bone by putting it back into place.

### Devices

**Elastic bandage:** Stretchy bandages used to wrap sprains and strains. Provides support and compression during recovery.

**Splint:** A rigid accessory used to stabilize and protect an injured joint.

**Orthopedic cast:** A protective device applied to an injured joint or limb to limit motion and promote healing.

**Traction splint:** A splint used for leg fractures to relieve pressure on the injured limb.

### Surgery

**Surgery to connect broken bones (Internal fixation):** A surgery to repair a broken bone using implants.

**Surgery to stabilize broken bones (External fixation):** Using a splint or cast to hold a broken bone in place so it can heal properly.

### Therapies

**Joint manipulation:** Stretching a joint past its current restricted range of motion to restore movement and reduce pain.

**Physical therapy:** Restores muscle strength and function through exercise.

### Medications

**Bone health:** Helps strengthen and build bones.

- Alendronic acid (Fosamax, Binosto, and Fosamax Plus D)
- Risedronic acid (Actonel and Atelvia)

### Specialists

**Orthopedic surgeon:** Performs surgery for conditions affecting bones and muscles.

**Trauma surgeon:** Performs surgery to repair damage caused by injuries.

**Primary care provider (PCP):** Prevents, diagnoses, and treats diseases.

**Hand surgeon:** Performs surgery to treat hand conditions.

**Emergency medicine doctor:** Treats patients in the emergency department.

**Critical:** consult a doctor for medical advice

Note: The information you see describes what usually happens with a medical condition, but doesn't apply to everyone. This information isn't medical advice, so make sure to contact a healthcare provider if you have a medical problem. If you think you may have a medical emergency, call your doctor or a emergency number immediately.

**Sources:** Mayo Clinic and others. Learn more