



## 5TH METATARSAL FRACTURES





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## **Cause**

The 5th metatarsal is the long bone on the outside of the foot. Due to its location and shape it is commonly prone to injury, usually as a result of trauma such as a lateral ankle sprain. There are two main types of 5th metatarsal fractures that are classified based on their location. Symptoms and treatment for 5th metatarsal fractures are similar with regards to different types and they usually need imaging to determine the location and type of fracture.

## **Avulsion Fracture**

A small piece of bone is pulled off the main portion of the bone by a tendon or ligament. This type of fracture is the result of an injury in which the ankle rolls. Avulsion fractures are often overlooked when they occur with an ankle sprain.

## **Jones Fracture**

Jones fractures occur in a small area of the fifth metatarsal that receives less blood and as a result takes longer to heal. A Jones fracture can be either a stress fracture (a tiny hairline break that occurs over time) or an acute (sudden) break. Jones fractures are caused by overuse, repetitive stress or trauma. They are less common and more difficult to treat than avulsion fractures.

Other types of fractures can occur in the fifth metatarsal including midshaft fractures, which usually result from trauma or twisting, and fractures of the metatarsal head and neck.



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## Symptoms

- Pain, swelling and tenderness on the outside of the foot
- Bruising
- Night pain
- Difficulty placing pressure on the area

## Treatment

- RICE
- Immobilisation usually with a CAM walker
- Offloading either with the CAM walker or crutches
- Surgery may be required in some cases if there is poor bone alignment following the fracture

