

## Return to sport:

Your child can return to sports when there is full strength in the ankle. You can test ankle strength by asking your child to hop on the injured leg. Before returning to competitive sport, you may want to see a doctor or physiotherapist who knows about athletic and sport-related injuries. Most children are doing all their normal sports and play by three months after the injury.

## Problems

If your child has sudden new pain, swelling or tingling in their injured area, that would be unusual. If this happens, please come back to the children's emergency department at any time.

If you have any other problems, for example, the pain does not go away after taking simple pain medicines, please come back to the emergency department.

To ensure your child's injury is being treated correctly, their x-rays are looked at by specialist x-ray doctors. If we have any concerns we will contact you directly, and may ask you to come back to hospital.

## How to find us

For information on directions, public transport and parking visit [www.kch.nhs.uk](http://www.kch.nhs.uk) and look at 'Getting to King's'.

## Sharing your information

We have teamed up with Guy's and St Thomas' Hospitals in a partnership known as King's Health Partners Academic Health Sciences Centre. We are working together to give our patients the

best possible care, so you might find we invite you for appointments at Guy's or St Thomas'. To make sure everyone you meet always has the most up-to-date information about your health, we may share information about you between the hospitals.

## Care provided by students

We provide clinical training where our students get practical experience by treating patients. Please tell your doctor or nurse if you do not want students to be involved in your care. Your treatment will not be affected by your decision.

## PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) is a service that offers support, information and assistance to patients, relatives and visitors. They can also provide help and advice if you have a concern or complaint that staff have not been able to resolve for you. The PALS office is located on the ground floor of the Hambleton Wing, near the main entrance on Bessemer Road - staff will be happy to direct you.

Tel: **020 3299 3601**

Email: [kch-tr.PALS@nhs.net](mailto:kch-tr.PALS@nhs.net)

You can also contact us by using our online form at [www.kch.nhs.uk/contact/pals](http://www.kch.nhs.uk/contact/pals)

**If you would like the information in this leaflet in a different language or format, please contact PALS on 020 3299 1844.**

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# Minor injuries of the ankle

## Information for patients and parents/carers

This leaflet explains what to do if you/your child has been diagnosed with a minor injury of the ankle. It explains the symptoms, what you can do and what you can expect.

## Introduction:

Your child has been seen and assessed by one of the doctors or nurse practitioners who believes it is safe for you to take your child home. This leaflet has been written by the doctors and nurses working in the children's emergency department to act as a guide and is to remind you of some of the things you need to know in order to look after your child in the future. We hope this will be helpful to you. Please read it carefully.

## Ankle injuries:

Minor ankle injuries are either:

- an injury to the ligaments of the ankle (sprain)
- a small break (fracture) to the bone on the outside of the ankle (fibula).

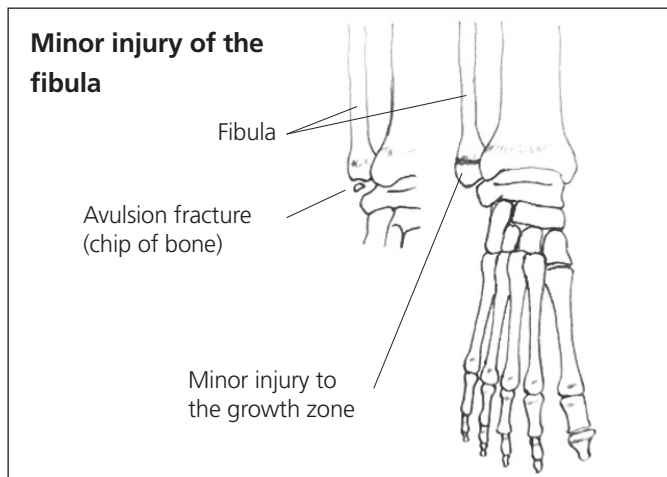
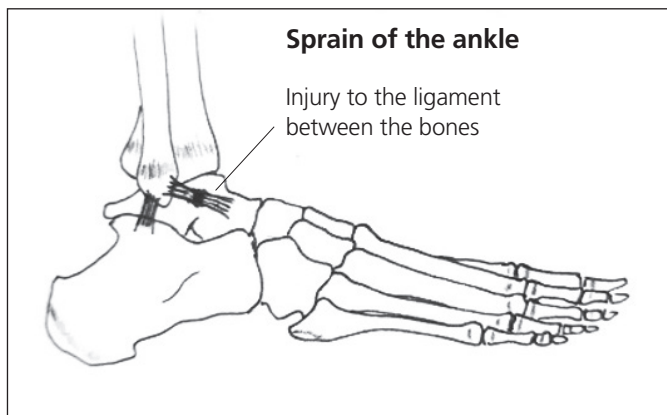
Hearing us say your child has a 'fracture' sounds serious. The good news is these are minor, stable injuries and will heal completely in children. This is why we can treat them just like a sprain.

## What to expect

- Your child will have some pain. It should be mild and settle over the next few days.
- It may take up to a month for your child's ankle to heal. Feel free to remove the support and/or stop using crutches any time your child says they feel little pain when walking.

## Treatment

These injuries heal well with time. They do not need a cast or need to visit a bone specialist. If your child is having trouble walking, they may use crutches and/or a rigid boot that can support the injured ankle while it is healing. In the first few days after the injury...



- **Gentle movement** and a little body-weight can be taken on the injured ankle. This works better than keeping it completely still. Moving the ankle gently, even if it causes a little discomfort, will not cause more damage.
- **Keep the foot up** on a pillow as much as possible. This will reduce swelling.
- Use **paracetamol** as a painkiller.

Then after the first 3-5 days when the pain and swelling have improved...

- Improve **movement** by flexing the ankle up and down. Try tracing circles with the big toe in the air. Do this every couple of hours.
- Then improve **balance** by standing on one leg (the injured side)
- Then improve **strength** by taking a little more weight through the leg each day. Then start walking up and down stairs. Most children want to get back to play or sport as soon as possible!
- A **positive attitude** is important! Fear and sadness are barriers to a speedy recovery.
- Return to **'no-impact' exercise** gradually once the pain has improved.

## Virtual Fracture Clinic:

Your child has been referred to our 'Virtual Fracture Clinic'. This means your child's x-ray will be looked at by our orthopaedic (bone specialist) and physiotherapy teams and reviewed. The team will then contact you by phone (the telephone number will be a withheld number) within **three working days** of your visit to discuss your child's condition and go through what to expect next.

The phone call will be between the hours of **9am – 4pm**, Monday – Friday.

**PLEASE ENSURE WE HAVE YOUR CORRECT CONTACT DETAILS BEFORE YOU LEAVE THE EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT.**

If you have not received a call within three working days of your child's visit, please contact **020 3299 4041** between 9am – 4pm, Monday - Friday.  
Email: [kch-tr.fracturecareteam@nhs.net](mailto:kch-tr.fracturecareteam@nhs.net)