

# TODDLER'S FRACTURE

## What is a toddler's fracture?

- A toddler's fracture is an injury to the big bone below the knee, sometimes called the shin bone (tibia).
- The bone is broken, but it is held tightly together by the outer covering of the bone (periosteum).
- This is a stable injury, like a sprain.
- This happens in children aged 1-4 years old.

## How do you know it's a toddler's fracture?

- The child injured themselves from a fall, tripping, twisting or going down a slide.
- The child feels pain when the leg is pushed on over the shin bone.
- The child may limp or not want to walk.
- X-rays are taken which show a broken bone near the ankle (see picture to the right).
- The bone may be broken even if an X-ray doesn't specifically show broken bone. This is called a "suspected toddler's fracture."



a

## How do you care for your child with a toddler's fracture?

- Your child should be evaluated in the Orthopedic Surgery Clinic within 1 week of their injury.
  - They do not need an X-ray at that visit.
  - Call (816) 234-3075 to make an appointment in the clinic.
- Your child will need to wear a special boot, called a controlled ankle motion (CAM) boot or a walking boot.
- The boot must be removed at least 1 time per day.
  - Check the skin every day at bedtime or bath time.
  - Look for redness, blisters, bruising or openings in the skin, which may be caused by the boot being too loose or too tight.



Redness



Blisters

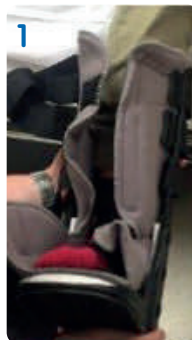


Bruising

- If you see any of these on your child's skin:
  - » Please call the Orthopedic Surgery Clinic at (816) 234-3075 or send a picture through the Patient Portal.
  - » Do not put the boot back on your child until you hear from your care team.
  - » You may need to bring your child to the clinic so we can check how the boot is fitting and look at your child's skin.
- Your child does not have to sleep in the boot.

## How do I know the boot is on right?

1. Place the heel firmly down the back of the CAM boot.
2. Place padding over the foot and shin.
3. Make sure the toes do not extend past the boot.
4. Fasten the Velcro straps so the boot doesn't move while it is being worn.



## How long does it take for the broken bone to heal?

- After your child has started to walk in the boot, they can start to wear it less. This usually happens between 2-4 weeks after the injury.
- Most of the time, children are done wearing their boot by 4 weeks after the injury.
- At your child's first visit to the Orthopedic Surgery clinic, we will talk with you about whether or not your child needs any additional visits or follow-up x-rays. Most of the time, they won't need to come back for any more x-rays or visits.

## Will my child have problems with their leg after a toddler's fracture?

- This kind of fracture usually has no long-term problems after it is healed.
- Your child may limp or walk differently for up to 1 month after they stop wearing the boot (up to 2 months after injury).

## Please call the Orthopedic Surgery Clinic at (816) 234-3075 for an appointment 2 months after the injury if your child:

- Still has pain, OR
- Is still walking with a limp.
- For more information, please visit [orthokids.org/safety/playground-safety/](http://orthokids.org/safety/playground-safety/)



**Children's Mercy**  
KANSAS CITY

Copyright © 2025 The Children's Mercy Hospital. All rights reserved. Children's Mercy is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer and a United Way agency. DISCLAIMER: The content contained herein is meant to promote the general understanding of the health topic(s) described in this publication and is for informational purposes only. Such information does not serve as a substitute for a healthcare professional's clinical training, experience, or judgment. Individuals and their families should not use such information as a substitute for professional medical, therapeutic, or healthcare advice and counseling. NO WARRANTY WHATSOEVER, WHETHER EXPRESS OR IMPLIED BY LAW, IS MADE WITH RESPECT TO THE CONTENT.