

Stress Fractures

Stress fractures are bone injuries that can develop when repeated loading exceeds the bone's ability to recover. They may follow a rapid increase in training or occur with ordinary activity when bone is weakened.

Recognize the pattern

Pain often builds with activity and is tender over a particular area. The foot and lower leg are common sites, but stress fractures can also occur near the hip. Do not keep running or jumping through suspected bone pain.

Get the injury assessed

Your clinician will review symptoms, activity changes, and bone-health risks. Early X-rays may not show the injury, so further imaging may be needed. New hip or groin pain with difficulty bearing weight needs urgent assessment.

Protect the bone while it heals

Treatment depends on the bone and injury pattern. You may need to reduce weight bearing or use a boot or crutches. Some locations require specialist treatment or surgery. Returning too soon can worsen the injury.

Ask when you may resume work, walking, and sport, and whether bone health or nutrition needs assessment. Build activity back according to your clinician's plan rather than a fixed timetable for every stress fracture.

Related reading

- Metatarsalgia (Forefoot Pain)
- Hip Fractures

Sources and further information

- AAOS: Stress fractures of the foot and ankle
- AAOS: Hip fractures

This handout provides general education. Your treating clinician can explain how it applies to your injury.