

# How to Treat a Broken Bone

## First Aid



Broken bones (fractures) require medical attention.

If the broken bone is due to a major trauma or injury, call 911.

To avoid further injury, don't move the person unless necessary.

### Also call for emergency help if:

- The person is unresponsive, isn't breathing, or isn't moving. Begin CPR if there's no breathing or heartbeat.
- There is heavy bleeding
- Even gentle pressure or movement causes pain
- The limb or joint appeared deformed
- The bone has pierced the skin
- The extremity of the injured arm or leg, such as a toe or finger, is numb or bluish at the tip
- You suspect a bone is broken in the neck, head, or back



### Take these actions immediately while waiting for medical help:

- **Stop any bleeding.** Apply pressure to the wound with a sterile bandage, clean cloth, or clean piece of clothing
- **Immobilize the injured area.** Don't try to realign the bone or push a bone that's sticking out back in. If you've been trained in how to splint and professional help isn't readily available, apply a splint to the area above and below the fracture sites. Padding the splints can help reduce discomfort.
- **Apply ice packs to limit swelling and help relieve pain.** Don't apply ice directly to the skin. Wrap the ice in a towel, piece of cloth, or some other material.
- **Treat for shock.** If the person feels faint or is breathing in short, rapid breaths, lay them down with the head slightly lower than the trunk. If possible, elevate the legs.

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Sources: <https://www.mayoclinic.org/first-aid/first-aid-fractures/basics/art-20056641>

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