

This is a follow-up letter to your recent telephone consultation with the fracture care team explaining the ongoing management of your injury. Your case has been reviewed by an Orthopaedic Consultant (Bone Specialist) and Fracture Care Physiotherapist.

**You have sustained a stress fracture to a metatarsal which is a bone in your foot.**

A stress fracture is typically an overuse injury. It occurs when muscles become fatigued and are unable to absorb added shock. Eventually, the fatigued muscle transfers the overload of stress to the bone causing a tiny crack called a stress fracture. Stress fractures often are the result of increasing the amount or intensity of an activity too rapidly.

**Pain and Swelling:** The swelling is often worse at the end of the day and elevating it will help. Take pain killers as prescribed.

**Walking:** You may walk on the foot as comfort allows but you may find it easier to walk on your heel in the early stages. The boot you have been given is for your comfort only and is not needed to aid fracture healing but will help to settle your symptoms and should be worn for walking for 6 weeks.

**Follow up:** You will see a Foot and Ankle Specialist about 6 weeks after your injury. They will decide if further x-rays are required and advise about ongoing management. If you have not received this appointment within one week of receipt of this letter please contact the Booking Hub directly on Tel: .

**Picture of foot bones:**



If you are worried that you are unable to follow this rehabilitation plan, or have any questions, then please contact us for advice.

**Or,** if you are experiencing pain or symptoms, other than at the site of the original injury or surrounding area, please get in touch using the telephone or e-mail details at the top of this letter.

**York Virtual Fracture Clinic Contact details:**

**Phone:** 01904 726575

**Email:** virtualfractclinic@york.nhs.uk

Please follow the management plan below

What to expect:

Weeks since injury	Rehabilitation plan
0-6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Wear the boot for comfort.</li> <li>✓ If issued use the crutches to take some of the weight off your foot.</li> <li>✓ It is ok to take the boot off at night and when resting at home.</li> <li>✓ Start the exercises below to get your movement back.</li> </ul>
6-8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✗ Try to stop using the boot and walk without crutches.</li> <li>✓ Start around your home at first.</li> <li>✓ You may want to wear the boot if you go on a longer walk.</li> <li>✓ Continue with the exercises to regain flexibility in your foot and ankle.</li> </ul>
8 -12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Your injury is healed. You may have mild symptoms for 3-6 months.</li> <li>✓ You can begin to resume normal, day-to-day activities but be guided by any pain you experience.</li> <li>✗ Heavy tasks and long walks may still cause some discomfort and swelling.</li> </ul>

Advice for new injuries:

**Cold packs:** A cold pack (ice pack or frozen peas wrapped in a damp towel) can provide short term pain relief. Apply this to the sore area for up to 15 minutes, every few hours ensuring the ice is never in direct contact with the skin.

**Rest and Elevation:** Try to rest the foot for the first 24-72 hours to allow the early stage of healing to begin. Raise your ankle above the level of your hips to reduce swelling. You can use pillows or a stool to keep your foot up.

**Early movement and exercise:**  
Early movement of the ankle and foot is important to promote circulation and reduce the risk of developing a DVT (blood clot). Follow the exercises below without causing too much pain. This will ensure your ankle and foot do not become too stiff. These exercises will help the healing process.

Early weight bearing (putting weight through your injured foot) helps increase the speed of healing. Try to walk as normally as possible as this will help with your recovery.

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### Smoking advice:

Medical evidence suggests that smoking prolongs fracture healing time. In extreme cases it can stop healing altogether. It is important that you consider this information with relation to your recent injury. Stopping smoking during the healing phase of your fracture will help ensure optimal recovery from this injury.

For advice on smoking cessation and local support available, please refer to the following website: <http://smokefree.nhs.uk> or discuss this with your GP.

### Boot advice:

**Diabetic patients:** If you are diabetic please contact us to discuss your boot. This is particularly important if you have problems with your skin. We may provide you with a specialist diabetic boot.

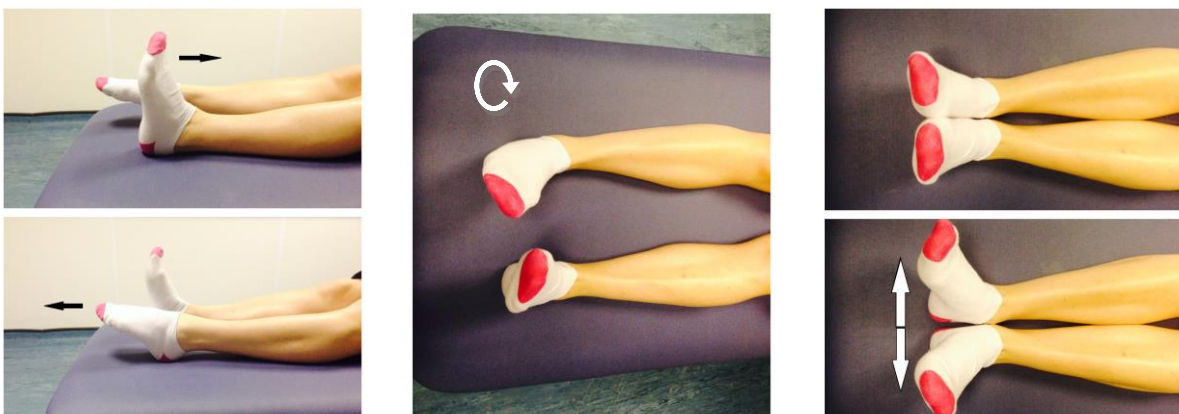
**Footwear for your uninjured foot:** We would recommend choosing a supportive shoe or trainer with a firm sole for your uninjured foot. You will notice that the boot you have been given has a thicker sole, by matching this height on the uninjured side you will reduce stress on other joints.

## Exercises

### Initial exercises to do 3-4 times a day

**Ankle and foot range of movement exercises. Repeat these 10 times each.**

1. Point your foot up and down within a comfortable range of movement.
2. Make circles with your foot in one direction and then change direction.
3. With your heels together move your toes apart as shown in the picture.



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