

Fracture safety

A parent's guide to signs, symptoms, treatment, and prevention.



If more pressure is put on a bone than it can stand, it will split or break. A break of any size is called a fracture. If the broken bone punctures the skin, it is called an open fracture (compound fracture).

A stress fracture is a hairline crack in the bone that develops because of repeated or prolonged forces against the bone. It is hard to tell a dislocated bone from a broken bone. However, both are emergency situations, and the basic first aid steps are the same.

Common causes of broken bones:

- Fall from a height
- Impact from a direct blow
- Cycling and vehicle accidents
- Repetitive forces, such as those caused by running and basketball, can cause stress fractures of the foot, ankle, tibia, or hip.

Symptoms:

- A visibly out-of-place or malaligned limb or joint
- Swelling, bruising, or bleeding
- Intense pain
- Numbness and tingling
- Broken skin with a bone protruding
- Limited mobility or inability to move a limb

First aid:

- Check the person's airway and breathing. If necessary, call 911 and begin CPR or bleeding control.
- Keep the person still and calm.
- Examine the person closely for other injuries.
- If medical help responds quickly, allow the personnel to take further action.
- If the skin is broken, it should be treated immediately to prevent infection. Don't breathe on the wound or probe it. Lightly rinse the wound to remove visible dirt or contamination, but do not vigorously scrub or flush the wound. Cover with sterile dressing.
- If needed, immobilize the broken bone with a splint or sling. Possible splints include a rolled up newspaper or strips of wood. Immobilize the joint both above and below the injured bone.
- Apply ice packs to reduce pain and swelling.
- Take steps to prevent shock. Lay the person flat, elevate the feet about 12 inches above the head, and cover the person with a coat or blanket.
- DO NOT move the person if a head, neck, hip, pelvis, or back injury is suspected.
- DO NOT attempt to reposition a bone unless blood circulation appears hampered.

When to contact a professional

Call 911 if:

- The suspected broken bone is in the head, neck, back, hip, pelvis, or upper leg.
- You cannot completely immobilize the injury at the scene by yourself.
- There is severe bleeding.
- An area below the injured joint is pale, cold, clammy, or blue.
- There is a bone projecting through the skin.
- Other broken bones may not be medical emergencies, but they still deserve medical attention. Contact your health care provider.



● **SSM Health Cardinal Glennon Children's Hospital**
1465 South Grand Blvd.
St. Louis, MO 63104



● **SSM Health Cardinal Glennon Pediatrics Specialty Services SSM Health St. Joseph Hospital**
400 Medical Plaza, Ste. 220
Lake Saint Louis, MO 63367



● **SSM Health Cardinal Glennon Pediatrics Specialty Services South County**
13000 Butler Crest Dr.
St. Louis, MO 63128



● **SSM Health Cardinal Glennon Pediatrics Specialty Services North County**
3878 Pershall Road
Ferguson, MO 63135



● **SSM Health Cardinal Glennon Pediatrics Specialty Services Anderson Ambulatory Surgery Center**
3403 Anderson HealthCare Dr.
Edwardsville, IL 62025

SSM Health Cardinal Glennon SportsCare

SSM Health Cardinal Glennon SportsCare is the premier pediatric sports medicine provider in St. Louis and St. Charles. We provide exclusive, direct access to comprehensive medical care for young athletes.

Specialists your child has access to include adolescent medicine physicians, cardiologists, emergency medicine physicians, neurologists, nutritionists, orthopedists, pediatric psychologists, physical therapists, pulmonologists, radiologists, and rehabilitation specialists. We also keep kids in the game through educational programs and supports for parents, coaches and athletes that focus on injury prevention, proper technique and overall athletic health.

For more information about SSM Health Cardinal Glennon SportsCare or to find a specialist for your athlete, call or text us **24/7 at 314-577-5640**.

Expert care for young athletes by SSM Health Cardinal Glennon Children's Hospital providers, **24 hours a day in the ER at:** SSM Health Cardinal Glennon Children's Hospital, DePaul Hospital, St. Clare Hospital, St. Joseph Hospital-St. Charles, St. Joseph Hospital-Lake St. Louis, Anderson Hospital, and HSHS St. Elizabeth Hospital.



During the COVID-19 pandemic, SSM Health ministries implemented enhanced safety measures, which are evaluated periodically based on COVID-19 transmission numbers. To ensure your protection and that of others, we continue to require face masks upon entry along with ministry-specific screening processes.