

Buckle fracture – tibia (lower leg)

What has happened to my child's leg?

Your child has broken the bone in their leg and has what is known as a “buckle” fracture. A fracture and a break are the same thing but in this case it is actually just a bulge. The bone has been squashed and will take 3 to 6 weeks to heal. This injury does not cause long-term problems.

Why doesn't my child get a plaster cast?

Research has shown that a buckle fracture will heal just as well in a splint or CAM boot. This avoids the problems associated with a plaster cast and means the splint or boot can be removed to wash. All X-rays will be reviewed by a senior doctor to ensure the appropriate treatment is given. If it is not as simple as a buckle fracture they will call you.

How long does my child have to wear the splint/boot?

3 weeks from the day of the injury. They can be removed for washing. The CAM boot can be removed at night for sleep, but the splint needs to be worn day and night. After 3 weeks, the splint or boot can come off. Your child does not need to come back to the fracture clinic.

My child won't keep the splint on – what can I do?

If you have a small child who simply won't keep it on, they will have to go into plaster instead. Please come back to the emergency department and we can put one on.

When can my child play sports?

Your child should avoid PE, sports and rough play for another 3 weeks after the removal of the splint or boot – i.e. a total of 6 weeks post injury off sports.

Is there anything to look out for?

Your child may need painkillers for the first few days such as paracetamol and/or ibuprofen. There may also be some swelling, which should settle after a few days. If your child gets any 'pins and needles' in their feet, you should loosen the splint. If loosening the splint does not help, see a doctor for advice. It is normal for the wrist to hurt for a few days after the splint comes off. This is to be expected and should settle.

If you have any concerns about the injury or splint contact your family doctor.



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