



Ticket to Healthy Living

BROKEN BONES AND SPRAINS



Texas
Children's
Health Plan is
your family's
ticket to
health care.



What is a broken bone?

A broken bone is a crack or break in a bone that is a result of an accident or fall.

Signs you might see

- Your child will be in a lot of pain.
- The area around the bone swells up.
- Your child may not be able to use the leg or arm.
- The bone under the skin may look bent.
- Sometimes the bone may break through the skin.

What to do when your child breaks a bone

- Put a splint on an arm or leg that is broken. A splint is anything you can tie to a body part to stop it from moving. A rolled-up newspaper, magazine or stick may be used as a splint. Use something that is hard and solid.
- Never tie the body to the splint so tight that blood can't move to the area.
- If you think a leg bone is broken, do not let your child walk on it.
- Ice helps to reduce pain and swelling. Do not put ice right on the skin, instead wrap it in a towel. Leave it on for five minutes or less at a time. Remember R.I.C.E. – rest, ice, compression (pressure) and elevation (arm or leg is higher than the heart level).
- Do not give your child anything to eat or drink until you see the doctor.
- Do not wait to take your child to your doctor or a clinic. A broken bone should be checked right away.

When to call your doctor

You think your child has a broken bone.

What to do to prevent broken bones

- Never leave a young child alone on a high place, even for a few seconds. This includes sofas, changing tables or shopping carts. Your child can have a bad fall.
- Keep crib rails up to your baby's chin at all times.
- Do not use a baby walker. Your baby can tip over or crash through a safety gate.
- Put safety locks on your windows. Your child can open a window and fall out.

Sprains

- Your doctor may tell you that your child has a sprain, not a broken bone. A sprain is a problem with your child's muscle and not the bone. This is not as bad as a broken bone, but it still can be very painful.
- Ice helps to reduce pain and swelling. Wrap ice in a cloth and put it on the sprain. Never put ice directly on the skin. Leave it on for five minutes or less at a time.
- Rest the joint on a pillow higher than the body. Keep your child from using the joint.
- Give your child Tylenol for pain. Read the label to find out how much medicine to give. You can check with the doctor as well to make sure you give the right amount.
- Your doctor may tell you to use a heating pad or a warm damp towel on the sprain after the first 24 hours.
- Call your doctor or nurse if the sprain is not better in three to four days.