

Do's & Don'ts for Fractures & Dislocations

Signs & Symptoms to Spot it Fast

KNOW THE DIFFERENCE

FRACTURE = BROKEN BONE

A bone has cracked or snapped. It can be partial (cracked) or complete (broken in two). **Open fracture:** Bone breaks through the skin. **Closed fracture:** Skin is not broken — but it still hurts. A lot.

DISLOCATION = BONE OUT OF JOINT

The bone has been forced out of its normal position at a joint. Common spots: shoulder, elbow, finger, knee, hip.

Rule of thumb: If you're not sure which one it is — treat it like a fracture.

THE BIG DO'S & DON'TS

These mistakes can cause permanent damage. Know them. Avoid them.



DON'T

- Try to straighten the limb
- Pop a dislocated joint back in
- Remove clothing over a wound
- Give food or drink
- Leave them alone
- Press directly on exposed bone
- Tie a splint too tight



DO

- Support it as-is
- Call 000 and wait
- Cut clothing away gently
- They may need surgery
- Stay and reassure them
- Cover loosely with a damp, clean cloth
- Check fingers/toes for colour and warmth

SPOT IT FAST SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

Look for any of these:

Pain — sharp, intense, getting worse

Swelling — fast, obvious, at the injury site

Bruising — may appear quickly or over hours

Deformity — limb looks wrong. Bent. Crooked. Out of place.

Can't move it — won't or can't use the limb normally

Bone through skin — open wound at the injury site

Numbness or tingling — fingers or toes feel prickly or dead

A snap or crack sound — they may have heard it happen

Pale or bluish fingertips/toes below the injury — act fast

If you hear a snap and they scream — treat it as a fracture.

Don't wait.

