

Compliments, comments & complaints

If you'd like to compliment, comment or complain about our service please contact our Customer Services Department:

Customer Services Department

Livewell Southwest
Room AF3, Local Care Centre
200 Mount Gould Road
Plymouth
PL4 7PY

Tel: 01752 435201

Email: customerservicespch@nhs.net

Contact details

The Minor Injuries Units are open every day of the year, including Bank Holidays.

Minor Injuries Unit Cumberland Centre

Damerel Close
Plymouth
PL1 4JZ

Tel: 01752 434390

Opening times: 8:30am - 9pm

Minor Injuries Unit South Hams Hospital

Plymouth Road
Kingsbridge
TQ7 1AT

Tel: 01548 852349

Opening times: 9am - 5pm

Minor Injuries Unit Tavistock Hospital

Spring Hill
Tavistock
PL19 8LD

Tel: 01822 612233

Opening times: 8am - 10pm

www.livewellsouthwest.co.uk



Livewell Southwest



@livewellsw

Fractured Toe Information Leaflet



Minor Injuries Unit

Cumberland Centre
South Hams Hospital
Tavistock Hospital

This advice is about the care of a toe following an injury.

Your toes are made up of little bones called Phalanges and when you fracture your toe it is one of these bones that you have broken.

Fractured Toe

A broken toe is a common injury, usually caused by dropping a heavy object on the foot or hitting the toe on something.

It usually takes four to six weeks to heal.

A broken toe will be painful, swollen and red. There may be bruising of the skin around the area and sometimes a collection of blood beneath the toenail. You will find it difficult to walk and wearing a shoe will be painful.

If the break is severe, the toe may stick out at an angle.

Management mainly involves strapping the fractured toe to an adjacent uninjured toe. Union of the fracture occurs in 3 - 8 weeks but symptoms usually improve much earlier. If you have a painful swollen toe but no injury, see your GP, especially if you have diabetes.

Most broken toes can be cared for at home and medical treatment may not be necessary.

Caring for your broken toe

Put a piece of gauze between your injured toe and the one next to it and tape the two toes together with a plaster. The healthy toe will act as a splint.

Keep your foot raised for as long as possible, for example by resting it on cushions. This will help reduce swelling and pain.

Hold an ice pack (try frozen peas wrapped in a tea towel) to the toe for 10 minutes every one to two hours for the first couple of days. Do not apply ice directly to the skin.

Rest the toe by not walking or standing for too long, and not putting too much weight on the toe.

Take over-the-counter painkillers such as Paracetamol or Ibuprofen to relieve the pain.

Wear sturdy shoes that do not squash or bend the toe.

Attend your local Emergency Department if:

- Your toes are cold and numb or tingling
- The skin on your toes has turned blue or grey

Severe toe fractures

If the break is severe and bone has broken away at an angle, this will need to be moved back into place during a procedure known as a reduction.

You will be given an injection of local anaesthetic to numb the area and the nurse practitioner can often realign the bone through skin without making any cuts.

If a break is particularly severe, the nurse practitioner may refer you to the Emergency Department.

A broken toe bone that has pierced the skin and damaged the surrounding tissue may become infected, so the wound will need to be cleansed regularly.

If a lot of blood is trapped underneath the toenail and it is very painful, the blood will need to be drained through a small hole made in your nail, or the nail will need to be removed.

You may be given crutches for a fracture of the great toe so you can walk without putting weight on your foot for the first week.