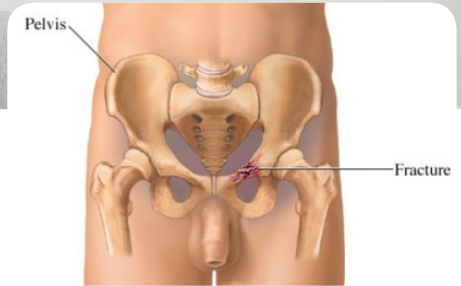


Pelvic Conditions: PELVIC FRACTURE



A pelvic fracture is defined as one or more breaks of the bones of the pelvis. This is a serious condition that requires immediate medical care.



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Causes

Pelvic fractures are caused by:

- Falls
- High velocity impacts to the body, such as motorcycle or car accidents

Risk Factors

A risk factor is something that increases your chance of getting a disease or condition. The following risk factors increase your chance of developing pelvic fractures:

- History of falls
- Osteoporosis
- Decreased muscle strength

Symptoms

Symptoms of a pelvic fracture include:

- Pelvic pain
- Pain upon walking, or inability to walk
- History of trauma in young children

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Diagnosis

Your doctor will ask about your symptoms and medical history. A physical exam will be done. You may be referred to a doctor who is a trauma specialist and/or a doctor who is a bone specialist. If you are in a car accident, you will probably be taken to a hospital emergency room.

Your bodily fluids may be tested.

This can be done with:

- Blood tests
- Urine tests

Your bodily structures may need to be

viewed. This can be done with:

- X-rays
- CT scan (CAT scan)

- MRI (magnetic resonance imaging)
- Abdominal ultrasound
- Urethrography
- Arteriography

Treatment

If diagnosed with a pelvic fracture, your physician may refer you to physical therapy. Physical therapy will focus on increasing range of motion, strength, and improving stabilization and functional integration.

RANGE OF MOTION

Following a period of immobilization to allow the bone to heal, the physical therapist may help you recover range of motion. The therapist will design a stretching and flexibility program that will allow you to bend, straighten and rotate your lower extremity through an increasing range. The therapist may also incorporate the use of specific manual therapy techniques to improve muscle tone, pliability and joint mechanics as well as use modalities to control pain and associated inflammation.

STRENGTH

As range of motion progresses, the therapist will begin to work on increasing your strength in the lower body and core. Typically, exercises will start with simple muscle contractions and become more advanced as you become stronger.

STABILIZATION AND FUNCTIONAL INTEGRATION

Stabilization and functional activity integration represent the final phases of rehabilitation. The therapist will create specific protocols to retrain focus on the activities you enjoyed prior to the injury. Exercises will focus on continued strength and endurance as well as controlled use of the injured area, recreating balance and awareness in the body.

Prevention

To help reduce the chance of getting pelvic fractures, take the following steps:

- Prevent falls by using a stable stool or stepladder to reach high places. Add handrails along stairways and place nonslip mats in the bathroom, shower, and under carpets.
- Lower the chance of injuries due to car and motorcycle accidents by always wearing your seatbelt. Never drive if you have been drinking, and don't ride with anyone else who has been.
- Always use safety precautions to avoid falls during high-risk sports, such as rock climbing and mountaineering.
- Maintain muscle strength, which will help to prevent falls.