

# Dislocations & Fractures

## Dislocations

A dislocation involves the displacement of a bone from its joint. These injuries are often underestimated, and can have serious consequences in the form of damage to nerves and blood vessels. Often, joints continue to dislocate as they have healed incorrectly or the person has a congenital condition.

### Signs and Symptoms

- Deformity at the joint
- Discolouration
- Tenderness
- Swelling
- Loss of movement
- Lack of pain after the incident

### Treatment

- Apply a cold pack to the area to decrease swelling
- Rest the affected joint or limb
- Support the area in a position of comfort
- Seek medical attention
- Do not attempt to relocate the dislocation as you may cause further damage to lower area of the limb by cutting off circulation or pinching a nerve

## Fractures

A fracture is a break or crack in the bone. Several types of fractures exist, but fractures resulting in bone fragments that penetrate the surface of the skin (called open fractures) are particularly dangerous. Loss of normal positioning of the fractured extremity can obstruct blood flow to the affected limb.

### Signs and Symptoms

- Tenderness
- Swelling
- Deformity
- Bleeding occurs when a fractured bone pierces the skin
- Sensation may be lost below the fracture

### Treatment

- Flush open wounds associated with open fractures with clean, fresh water and cover them with a dry dressing.
- Splint the injured area to keep it from moving.
- Support a broken limb by using the best material available for a splint, such as sticks, part of a backpack frame, or other stabilising device. Manual immobilisation is also effective.
- Wrap tape around the splint and the extremity affected.
- Try to immobilize the joint above and below the fracture.
- Call 000

