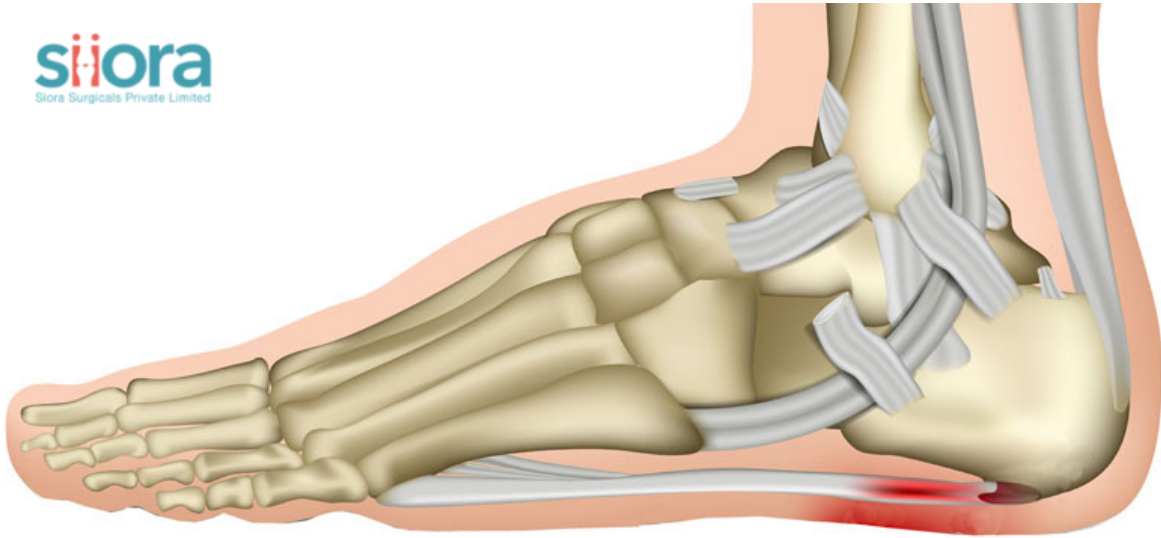


Calcaneal Stress Fractures - An Expert Guide



The calcaneus is the large bone present at the heel of the foot. Being in the lower extremity, it is put under a lot of stress when we perform various activities. Fractures in the heel bone occur as a result of a fall from a height. Now, if we talk about stress fractures in the calcaneus, then they occur because of overuse of the bone over a period of time.

In this post, we will be discussing heel bone fractures in detail along with symptoms and diagnosis.

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An Introduction to Calcaneal Stress Fractures

A stress fracture is a tiny crack or break in a bone that occurs because of repetitive use of a bone for a long period of time. In the case of a stress fracture in the heel bone, the break occurs in the calcaneus.

A calcaneal stress fracture is a painful condition that makes it difficult for the person to walk or even stand. To avoid making the condition worse, it is important to get the fracture diagnosed and treated timely.

What Are the Symptoms of Calcaneal Stress Fractures?

Intense heel pain is the commonest symptom of calcaneal stress fracture and this makes it troublesome for the person to walk or stand. Besides this, other symptoms associated with the condition include:

Increased pain while stretching the foot

Pain at a single spot on the heel

Pain that becomes worse while standing for a long time

Redness around the heel

Bruising

Swelling

Tenderness or warmth to touch

Who Are at a High Risk of Developing Stress Fractures?

There are certain activities that increase the chances of stress fractures:

Dancing

Basketball

Soccer

Long-distance running

Track or field sports

Besides these, certain conditions that also increase the risk of heel bone stress fractures include:

Eating disorder

Smoking

Excessive alcohol consumption

Occupational activities like physical labor

What is the Diagnosis of Calcaneal Stress Fracture?

The diagnosis of stress fractures requires both physical examination and imaging tests. During the physical examination, the orthopedic specialist will look for swelling, tenderness, and bruising at the heel to identify whether the symptoms are because of a stress fracture. Once this is done, imaging tests will be ordered to confirm the fracture. Here are some of the tests that may be performed:

X-ray

MRI

CT Scan

How Calcaneal Stress Fractures Are Treated?

Most cases of heel bone stress fractures heal without any surgical intervention. Here, the healthcare service provider will prescribe immobilization using a splint or a cast, medication, especially NSAIDs to improve pain and inflammation, and rest.

If we talk about surgery, then the person requires surgery in rare cases.

Rehabilitation plays a very important role in ensuring a fast and better recovery. It may take around 8 to 12 weeks for a person to resume routine activities.

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