

Femoral Shaft Fracture - Diagnosis and Treatment

A break in between the thighbone is referred to as a femoral shaft fracture. These fractures often occur because of high-energy trauma like car or bike accidents or a forceful impact by a heavy and solid object. Femur fractures can be open and may also be associated with neurovascular injuries.

The thigh bone is the strongest bone in the body and a strong force is required to break it. Hence, surgical intervention is often required for treatment. During surgery, the surgeon will use orthopedic implants to stabilize broken bone fragments and allow their healing.

Here, we will talk about femoral shaft fractures in detail including their diagnosis and treatment.

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What Are the Different Types of Femoral Shaft Fractures?

Depending on the pattern of the break and the intensity of the force that causes the break defines the type of femoral shaft fracture. The most common types of femur shaft fractures include:

Transverse Fracture

These are the fractures in which the break goes in a straight line along the femoral shaft.

Oblique Fracture

When the fracture occurs in an angled line, it is known as an oblique fracture.

Spiral Fracture

A twisting force to the thigh causes spiral fractures; in this case, the break encircles the shaft.

Comminuted Fracture

This is when the bone breaks into multiple pieces, especially three or more.

Open Fracture

In open fractures, the fractured bone pierces out of the skin.

What Can Cause Femoral Shaft Fractures?

High-energy trauma like an automobile accident is the most common cause of femoral shaft fractures. Being hit by a car or a heavy solid object can also break the femoral shaft.

In people with weak bones or conditions like osteoporosis, low-impact injuries may also cause a fracture.

What Are the Symptoms of Femur Shaft Fractures?

Fractures in the femur shaft cause immediate and severe pain. Besides this, the affected person will experience swelling, bruising, difficulty in putting weight on the fractured leg, and numbness.

Open fractures depict the bone breaking out of the skin. These fractures are severe and require immediate medical attention. In open fractures, excessive bleeding may occur.

How Femur Shaft Fractures Are Diagnosed?

Open fractures require emergency treatment whereas, other femur shaft fractures require physical examination as well as imaging tests.

The physical examination involves looking for visible signs & symptoms that include swelling, bruising, deformity in the leg, and painful movements.

What is the Treatment for Femur Shaft Fractures?

Both surgical and non-surgical treatments are available for femur shaft fractures, and that depends on the severity and the cause of the condition. In non-displaced fractures, closed reduction may fix the fracture followed by the application of a cast or splint. NSAIDs may also be suggested to curb pain and inflammation.

Surgical intervention is required in the case of severe fractures like open fractures or where the broken bone fragments have been severely displaced. Intramedullary nailing and ORIF are two of the common surgical procedures that may be performed.

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