

# Tailbone Injury

## Definition

- The most common injury is a bruised tailbone
- The tailbone is the small bone at the lower end of the spine
- Location: upper part of the groove between the buttocks

## Health Information

### Types of Tailbone Injuries

- Bruising of the bone is the most common tailbone injury.
- Main cause: falling onto a hard surface, such as ice or stairs.
- Fractures of the tailbone are rare. They heal fine without any special treatment. Therefore, an X-ray is not needed for tailbone injuries.
- Dislocations of the tailbone are even more rare. They need to be put back in place (reduced) by a doctor.

## Care Advice

1. **Overview:**
  - A bruised tailbone makes it painful to sit.
  - The skin over the bone may also be bruised and tender.
  - Passing stools may become painful.
  - Even if it's broken, it will heal on its own. It will just take longer.
  - Here is some care advice that should help.
2. **Pain Medicine:**
  - For pain relief, give acetaminophen every 4 hours or ibuprofen every 6 hours as needed. (See Dosage table.)
3. **Cold or Warm Pack for Local Pain:**
  - For local pain, try a cold pack. You can also use ice wrapped in a wet cloth.
  - Put it on the area no longer than 20 minutes. Reason: avoid frostbite.
  - Use as needed for the first 24 - 48 hours.
  - After 48 hours, a heating pad or heat pack is better. Heat helps to relax tight muscles. Some patients prefer a heating pad from the start.
4. **Sit on a Cushion:**
  - Teach your child to sit leaning forward. Reason: so the body weight rests on the thighs rather than on the tailbone.
  - Putting a pillow on the front of the chair will also help.
  - For best results, buy a donut-shaped pillow or cushion to sit on.
5. **Offer Less Constipating Diet:**
  - Switch to a less constipating diet.
  - Add more high-fiber foods such as veggies, fruits and whole grains.

6. **Constipation Medicines:**

- If stools cause pain, give a stool softener. Reason: makes stool passage easier.
- You can use Miralax or mineral oil. No prescription is needed for these products.
- Use the dosage on the package.
- Note: Prunes or prune juice often works even better.

7. **What to Expect:**

- A bruised tailbone will hurt for about 3 to 4 weeks.
- A broken tailbone will take 8 - 12 weeks to heal.

## Call Your Doctor If

- Pain becomes worse
- Pain lasts over 4 weeks
- You think your child needs to be seen
- You have other questions or concerns

### Pediatric Care Advice

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