

# *Personal Training by Robert J. Bovee*

Researched & Written by Robert J. Bovee Certified Master PPT, RTS, ETS, FTS, LMS, WMS, HWFS, SNS,SSCS, MES, E/FT, PSCS, PRCS

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## **Common Injuries**

This article will cover some of the more common injuries a senior may incur. A definition of each injury, symptoms, causes of the injury, and short & long term treatment plans will be given.

### **Stress Fractures**

#### **Definition**

Stress fractures are tiny, incomplete breaks or cracks in a normal bone caused by repeated trauma or pounding. One of the most misdiagnosed of athletic injuries, stress fractures can happen after a short period of stress, but more commonly after a longer period of continued trauma. When the bone cells cannot rebuild as fast as the repetitive trauma damages them and the bones can take no more stress, the crack occurs. Stress fractures can occur in both the upper and lower body, but are most common in the foot.

#### **Symptoms**

The pain related to a stress fracture begins gradually and intensifies with continued activity. Pain, however is not always present as an early warning sign, or it is often ignored by athletes. Swelling and tenderness may also affect the area. One of a physician's best methods in determining a stress fracture is if pain is felt when pressure is applied from above and below. X-rays of the injured site should be taken, though the fracture may not show up for the first 5 to 10 days of the injury. When stress fractures are ignored the results can be serious. Complete breaks in the bone, especially in the hip, may necessitate surgery or prolonged disability.

#### **Causes of Injury**

- Switching to a harder or different surface.
- Rapid increase of speed or distance.
- Returning to intense activity after a layoff.
- Inadequate rest and excessive stress.
- A change in footwear without proper adjustment period.
- Improper shoe selection to accommodate foot type.

#### **Short Term Treatment**

- Discontinue the activity that caused the injury immediately.
- Rest.
- Ice.
- Elevation.

If pain and swelling does not subside after a few days with self-prescribed care, and if normal activities become difficult, professional help should be sought.

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## **Long Term Treatment**

- Non-impact aerobic activity such as swimming, rowing, cross-country skiing, walking or bicycling to maintain cardiovascular fitness.
- A cast may be used in tibial (lower leg) stress fractures. Metatarsal (foot) stress fractures may require casting for 4 to 6 weeks because these bones are more difficult to immobilize.
- A heel cup or special protective padding for heel fractures.
- Crutches to relieve the pressure and weight from the leg.
- Oral non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medications to alleviate pain and swelling.

The return to activity should be delayed for as long as possible - from 4 to 8 weeks - depending on the location and severity of the injury. Though the pain may subside after the second week of treatment, returning to a normal exercise routine can delay healing and can cause permanent damage.

For more information, please contact Robert J. Bovee at **(585) 330-0614**.