

**LAKE OF THE WOODS
DISTRICT HOSPITAL**

MANUAL: NURSING PROCEDURE
Added Nursing Skill

Number:

CATEGORY: Medical Directive

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ISSUED BY: Medical Advisory Committee

Date of Issue: Apr. 2008

REFERENCE:

Review/Revised:

TITLE: Ankle and Foot X-Rays

SANCTIONED BY: Medical Advisory Committee

CRITERIA: Initiation of the following therapies for any adult patients who present with possible symptoms of a fractured ankle or foot. Bony tenderness or inability to weight bear must be established according to Ottawa Ankle Rules.

INITIATED BY: Appropriately educated Registered Nurses working in the ER Department

PHYSICIAN NOTIFICATION: As Soon As Possible

CONTRAINDICATIONS TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS DIRECTIVE:

- Lack of patient consent
- Patients with multiple painful injuries are excluded
- Patients with head injuries are excluded
- Patients with diminished sensation due to a neurological deficit are excluded (example: CVA, altered level of consciousness)

PATIENT DESCRIPTION/POPULATION:

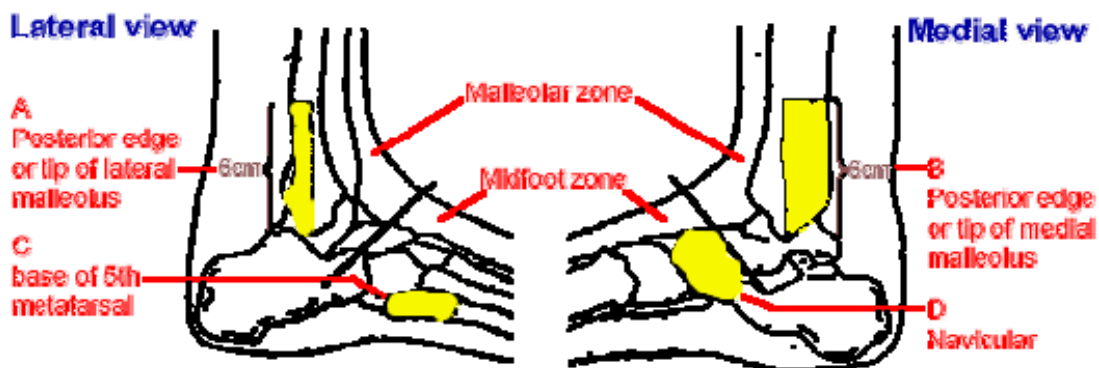
Patient must present with pain suggestive of a fractured ankle or foot on initial assessment by nurse. Affected leg may be swollen and painful on examination. A history of injury or trauma must be present.

Note: Patient must be older than 5 years of age.

PROCEDURE FOR DIRECTIVE:

- Each intervention will be explained to the patient and/or family and verbal consent will be obtained
- Establish baseline vital signs (B/P, pulse, respirations, O2 saturation) as indicated
- Patient to remain NPO until examination with Emergency Physician has been achieved
- Establish history of trauma or significant injury – document
- Document date of LMP on females of child bearing years – document if pregnancy is suspect
- An ice pack or cold compress is to be applied to injuries less than 8 hours old
- Tetanus status in the presence of broken skin integrity
- Note and document any lacerations, abrasions, edema, ecchymosis and/or deformity
- Determine the range of motion, weight bearing ability and functions before and after the injury
- Assess and document the neurovascular status of the injured extremity, checking for the 6Ps: Pulses, Pain, Pallor, Paresthesia, Paralysis and Polar (temperature)
- Assess patient according to the Ottawa Ankle Rules – X-Ray ankle and/or foot as indicated by examination

Ottawa Ankle and Foot Rules



Ottawa Rules with Respect to Ankle X-rays

An ankle x-ray is required only if there is any pain in malleolar zone and any of these findings:

- bony tenderness at the lateral malleolar **zone A** (from the tip of the lateral malleolus to include the lower 6 cm of posterior border of the fibula)
- bony tenderness at the medial malleolar **zone B** (from the tip of the medial malleolus to the lower 6 cm of the posterior border of the tibia)
- inability to walk four weight bearing steps immediately after the injury and in the emergency department

Ottawa Rules with Respect to Foot X-rays

A foot x-ray is required if there is any pain in the midfoot zone and any of these findings:

- bone tenderness at Navicular bone **zone C**
- bone tenderness at base of the 5th metatarsal **zone D**
- inability to weight bear both immediately and in the emergency department

DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS:

- Implementation of this Medical Directive must be documented on the ER chart under physician orders.
- Response to medication administered must be documented.

REFERENCES:

Chatham-Kent *Health Alliance* MEDICAL DIRECTIVES AND ADVANCED TRIAGE PROTOCOLS , June 2004, Chatham-Kent, Ontario

Lakeridge Health *Lakeridge Health Corporation* EMERGENCY MEDICAL DIRECTIVES , 2005, Oshawa, Ontario

Validation of the Ottawa Knee Rule in children: A multicentre study. Bullock, B., et al, *Annals of Emergency Medicine*, 42, (1), July 2003, Pages 48-55

DATE OF APPROVAL OF DIRECTIVE:

SIGNATURES:

Program Medical Advisor

Chief of Staff