

## Fact Sheet

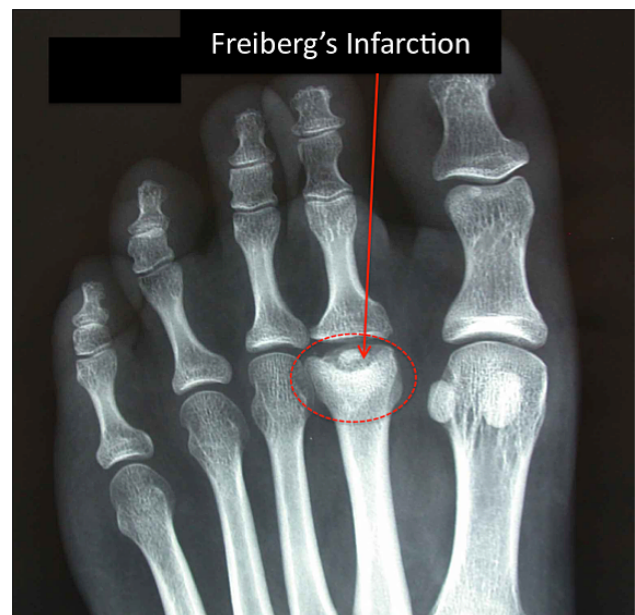
# Freiberg's Disease

### What is Freiberg's Disease?

Freiberg's Disease is a condition specific to the lesser metatarsal heads, most commonly seen in the second metatarsal. Also known as avascular necrosis, this condition results in a focal loss of blood supply to the metatarsal head. Freiberg's Disease is more commonly seen in younger female athletes who perform in sprinting or jumping activities.

### Symptoms

- Pain and swelling localized to the metatarsal head are the most specific symptoms. Pain may be increased with weight bearing and typically becomes worse with the duration of time spent on the feet.
- Patients typically present with pain, stiffness, and a limp. History of trauma may or may not exist. The pain often is vague, related to activity, and poorly localized to the forefoot.



### Causes

The exact nature of the cause of Freiberg's disease is unknown. It most likely is multi factorial, including vascular and traumatic injuries. Certain patients may be:

- Anatomically predisposed based on local mechanical, vascular, and developmental factors
- Rapid skeletal growth
- Stress or injury of the foot



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## Treatment

- Rest and immobilization - A period of rest and immobilization from weight bearing (usually 6 weeks) is required in the early part of treatment for this condition to allow the fracture site to heal. Immobilization is often achieved with a cast or cam walker as prescribed by your practitioner.
- Pain medication - Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medications such as Voltaren may be given for pain relief and to reduce inflammation.
- Shoe modification and padding - As prescribed by your practitioner, shoe modifications or padding may be used to offload the affected metatarsal.
- Orthotics - May be used to reduce the painful symptoms of Freiberg's Disease. The orthotics achieve this by re-aligning the foot; therefore, offloading the forefoot during activity and weight bearing.
- Surgery - Surgical repair of the fracture site may be required if healing has not taken place after 6 weeks.



### **ALWAYS CONSULT A TRAINED PROFESSIONAL**

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