



How Broken Bones Heal



Overview

Many of us have broken a bone at some time in our lives. A broken bone can be frightening and painful. But with time (and proper care), your body will heal even a bad fracture. Have you ever wondered how that process works? Let's take a moment to learn more.

Immediately after injury

Immediately after a break, your body goes into healing mode. The injured area becomes inflamed and swollen. Soon, a protective blood clot forms around the fracture. Inside the clot, special white blood cells begin to clean up the fracture. They destroy bacteria and bone fragments.

Healing

Next, a band of soft, healing tissue forms around the break. We call it a "callus." It joins the bones. It will be soft and spongy for the next four days to three weeks. But as the break heals, new bone begins to form in the gap. The callus gets stronger and harder. Within six to 12 weeks, the mend is complete.

Remodeling

Finally, even long after your fracture has mended, your body is working to remodel your bone so that it looks like it did before the injury. This process can take three to nine years. But when it's done, your bone is as good as new.