

Osteomyelitis

Osteomyelitis is an inflammatory reaction in a bone that is caused by an infection. This is a very serious infection that needs treatment immediately. Please go to your local emergency room if you suspect your child has such an infection.

CAUSES AND RISK FACTORS

Infection of the bone can happen:

- When an infection in another part of the body has moved through the bloodstream to the bone (most common)
- When the skin and bone are punctured by a contaminated object such as a nail
- When a broken bone has penetrated the skin

SYMPTOMS AND TYPES

Symptoms may include:

- Fever
- Pain near the affected bone
- Tenderness to touch
- Swelling near the affected bone
- Warmth over swollen area
- Refusing to stand or walk using the involved leg or foot
- Refusing to move the infected limb

DIAGNOSIS AND TESTS

Tests may include:

- Blood tests to identify the presence of infection and inflammation
- X-rays of the affected area to locate the infection
- Sometimes a bone scan or an MRI to evaluate the affected area better
- A bone biopsy to identify the type of bone infection. A small piece of bone is sent to the lab for analysis. It usually takes a few days to get the results.

TREATMENT AND CARE

Orthopedic surgeons work hand-in-hand with infectious disease physicians to treat bone infections. Depending on the details of your child's diagnosis, the doctors may choose one or both of the following methods to treat Osteomyelitis.

Surgery: Your doctor may decide to take your child to surgery to

- Get a culture or bone biopsy
- Remove parts of the infected bone and cleanse the surrounding tissue and bone

Medication: Infection of the bone requires long term treatment with antibiotics.

LIVING AND MANAGING

If you think that your child has a bone infection, please go to your local emergency room.



**Need an appointment or have questions?
Call 832-822- 3100 for the Main Campus Clinic and
Health Centers.
For our West Campus location, call 832-227-7678.**