Fractures: What they are, how to identify them, and how to treat them.

A bone fracture, is a medical condition, where the continuity of the bone is broken. Most fractures occur, as result of stress, or high force impact. However, there are also pathological fractures. Fractures, which are caused by a medical condition. For example: osteoporosis, cancer, or osteogenesis imperfecta(brittle bone disease).

There are several types of fractures:

- **Avulsion fracture** – a muscle or ligament pulls on the bone, fracturing it.
- **Comminuted fracture** – the bone is shattered into many pieces.
- **Compression (crush) fracture** – generally occurs in the spongy bone in the spine. For example, the front portion of a vertebra in the spine may collapse due to osteoporosis.
- **Fracture dislocation** – a joint becomes dislocated, and one of the bones of the joint has a fracture.
- **Greenstick fracture** – the bone partly fractures on one side, but does not break completely because the rest of the bone can bend. This is more common among children, whose bones are softer and more elastic.
- **Hairline fracture** – a partial fracture of the bone. Sometimes this type of fracture is harder to detect with routine xrays.
- **Impacted fracture** – when the bone is fractured, one fragment of bone goes into another.

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- **Intraarticular fracture** – where the break extends into the surface of a joint
- **Longitudinal fracture** – the break is along the length of the bone.
- **Oblique fracture** – a fracture that is diagonal to a bone's long axis.
- **Pathological fracture** – when an underlying disease or condition has already weakened the bone, resulting in a fracture (bone fracture caused by an underlying disease/condition that weakened the bone).
- **Spiral fracture** – a fracture where at least one part of the bone has been twisted.
- **Stress fracture** – more common among athletes. A bone breaks because of repeated stresses and strains.

How to identify a fracture:
The area affected is swollen, makes it very painful to move. The victim has limited movement. It feels like there is no bone in that area.

What to do:
Contact emergency services immediately. In the mean time, Immobilize the area- don't allow it to move. Applying ice can help, it reduces pain, and can prevent them from going into shock. Lay the person down with head slightly lower than trunk.

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