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## Bone pain or tenderness

Bone pain or tenderness is aching or other discomfort in one or more bones.

### Considerations

Bone pain is less common than joint pain and muscle pain. The source of bone pain may be clear, such as from a fracture following an accident. Other causes, such as cancer that spreads (metastasizes) to the bone, may be less obvious.

### Causes

Bone pain can occur with injuries or conditions such as:

- Cancer in the bones (primary malignancy)
- Cancer that has spread to the bones (metastatic malignancy)
- Disruption of blood supply (as in sickle cell anemia)
- Infected bone (osteomyelitis)
- Injury (trauma)
- Leukemia
- Loss of mineralization (osteoporosis)
- Overuse
- Toddler fracture (a type of stress fracture that occurs in toddlers)

### Home Care

See your health care provider if you have bone pain and do not know why it is occurring.

### When to Contact a Medical Professional

Take any bone pain or tenderness very seriously. Contact your provider if you have any unexplained bone pain.

### What to Expect at Your Office Visit

Your provider will ask you about your medical history and do a physical exam.

Some questions that may be asked include:

- Where is the pain located?
- How long have you had pain and when did it start?
- Is the pain getting worse?
- Do you have any other symptoms?

You may have the following tests:

- Blood studies (such as CBC, blood differential)
- Bone x-rays, including a bone scan
- CT or MRI scan
- Hormone level studies
- Pituitary and adrenal gland function studies
- Urine studies

Depending on the cause of the pain, your provider may prescribe:

- Antibiotics
- Anti-inflammatory medicines
- Hormones
- Laxatives (if you develop constipation during prolonged bed rest)
- Pain relievers

If pain is related to thinning bones, you may need treatment for osteoporosis.

## Alternative Names

Aches and pains in bones; Pain - bones

## References

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