

Have you ever seen bones in a museum? You may have thought they were dry and dead. But inside your body, your bones are very much alive. One way you can tell they are alive is that they heal if they break.

A bone break is called a **fracture**. Doctors take **X-rays** to find out if a bone has broken. The X-rays show the kind of fracture. A bone can snap in two, or it can break into many small pieces. Sometimes it even sticks out through the skin. Ouch!

Do You Know?

If you think you have broken a bone, the worst thing you can do is to move it! Stay still and call an adult or an emergency telephone number. It is *extra* important to stay still if you break your neck or back.



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A healthy bone and a broken bone in the upper leg

A doctor will try to put a broken bone back in place so it will heal well. While it is healing, a **cast** or **splint** holds the bone still.

New bone tissue grows where the fracture took place. The new tissue joins together the pieces of the bone. The tissue usually gets hard in six to eight weeks. Then the bone is as good as new.

✓ Brain Check

- How can you tell bones are alive?
- Describe how a bone break heals.
- How long does a bone fracture take to heal?



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