Patient Reports With Traumatic or Acute Leg Pain

**RED FLAGS**

**Compartment Syndrome**
- History of:
  - Blunt trauma
  - Crush injury
  - Unaccustomed exercise
  - Symptoms intensified with muscle stretch
  - Pain out of proportion
  - Paresthesias
  - Tightness or fullness
  - Numbness
  - Anticoagulation therapy

**Achilles Rupture**
- Felt/heard a “pop”
- Palpable defect (posterior leg)
- Positive Thompson test: Absence of passive plantar flexion upon squeeze of calf muscles with patient prone or kneeling
- Inability to rise up on toes during single leg stance (ensure patient does not substitute by weight bearing through upper extremities)

**Fracture**
- Trauma
- Deformity

**Fibular Head Tenderness**

**Neurovascular Compromise**

**Deep Vein Thrombosis**
- Pain, swelling, redness/warmth, distended veins in calf
- Recent surgery, long distance travel, malignancy, pregnancy, trauma or leg immobilization

**Cellulitis or Other Infections**

**Hard/Soft Signs of Vascular Injury**

**Screening and Referral Tools (SRTs)**

**TRAUMATIC and ACUTE LEG PAIN**

**Leg Pain References p.18**

- **Antalgic Gait**
- **Focal tenderness**
- **(+ Tuning Fork test**
- **Pain/paresthesia during exercise**

**Antalgic Gait**

- **Yes**
  - **Profile (B) x 2 weeks**
  - **Analgesic Meds PRN (see p.16)**
  - **★ RICE**
  - **ROM/Stretching**
  - **Re-evaluate in 2 weeks**

- **No**
  - **Symptoms Persist?**
    - **Yes**
      - **Mostly Resolved**
        - **Duty-specific profile PRN**
        - **Analgesic meds PRN (see p.16)**
        - **RTD end of profile anticipated**
    - **No**

**For a suspected stress fracture:**
- **Consider** X-Ray (AP & Lateral)
  - (typically need 2 weeks symptoms for plain films)
- **Consider** bone scan
- **Profile (A) x 7-10 days**
- **Crutches (WBAT)**
- **Analgesic meds PRN (see p.16)**
- **★ RICE**
  - Referral: Call PT, Podiatry, Sports Medicine or Ortho, as indicated, for 24-72 hour consult

**Profiles**

Sample severe (A) and moderate (B) leg injury profiles on eProfile.

**A** (Severe leg injury examples:)
- Suspected stress fracture/fracture
- Acute Achilles tendonitis/partial or full rupture

**B** (Moderate leg injury examples:)
- Moderate to severe shin splints
- Acute on chronic Achilles tendinopathy

**Minimal leg injury example:**
- Mild to moderate shin splints