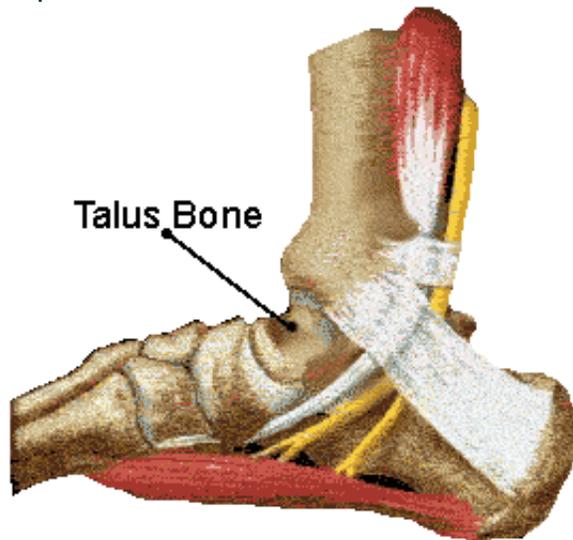


# Osteochondritis Dessicans

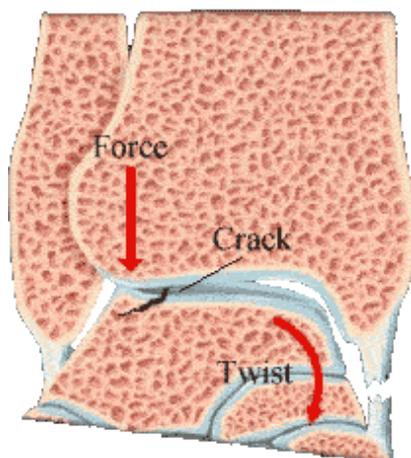
**Introduction** Osteochondritis dessicans is a problem which causes pain and stiffness of the ankle joint. It can occur in all age groups. Most cases of osteochondritis usually follow a twisting type injury to the ankle.

**Anatomy** The area where Osteochondritis Dessicans occurs is located at the top of the talus.



Most of these lesions are thought to be caused by injury to the bone underneath the joint surface by a twisting type injury. Some are actual chip type fractures, while others may result from injury to the bone's blood supply leading to an area of the bone actually dying.

**Causes** This is usually caused by a twisting or rotating of the ankle and / or foot.



- Symptoms** Osteochondritis may cause swelling and a generalized ache in the ankle. There may also be a catching sensation with the ankle in certain positions.
- Diagnosis** The diagnosis of Osteochondritis Dissecans may be suggested by the history and physical examination. X-rays of the ankle usually reveal a defect on the talar dome. A Cat Scan or MRI Scan may be necessary to determine the full extent of the area involved.
- Treatment** Treatment for OD depends on when the problem is discovered. If the problem is discovered immediately after a twisting injury to the ankle, then immobilization in a cast for 6 weeks may be suggested to see if the bone injury heals.

If the problem is not associated with an acute injury, surgery may be required to try and reduce your symptoms.

Surgery usually involves removing the loose fragment of cartilage and bone from the ankle joint and placing small drill holes in the defect. The drill holes stimulate new blood vessels to fill the area and helps to form scar tissue to fill the defect. In some cases the surgery can be done through the arthroscope, or an open incision may be required. You will probably be on crutches following surgery for at least 6 weeks.