

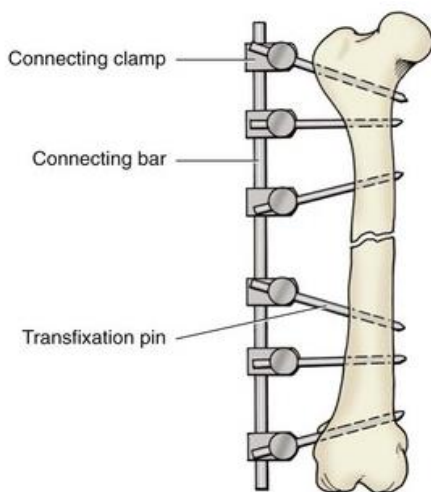
Pre-Operative Information: Fracture Fixation - External Skeletal Fixation

Price: from £1,800 (including VAT, March 2024)

The treatment goal of fracture fixation is to restore the patient to normal function as quickly as possible. There are a number of ways of managing bone fractures, including; **External Coaptation** (such as a bandage or cast), **External Skeletal Fixation (ESF)**, **Plating** (plate and screws) and **Pins & Wires**. Each can be used alone or in combination, the aim being to hold the fractured bone fragments still, stable and in their correct anatomical position while the process of fracture healing takes place.

Certain fractures (such as those of the pelvis, spine, jaw/skull and certain joints) can be complicated. While conventional x-rays are sufficient to confirm a diagnosis in most cases; CT scans are particularly important when planning for such complicated surgeries. We are currently unable to offer these procedures at Oakhill, but are happy to discuss these cases and direct you to a Specialist who can help.

The way in which we treat fractures depends on age, size, fitness, broken bone, type of fracture, and budget available. External Skeletal Fixation is an extremely versatile, affordable (implant costs are low), and adaptable method of fracture fixation. There is less specialist equipment, compared to Plate and Screw fixation, and the implants are removed once fracture healing is complete.



Components of an ESF system:

- Transfixation pins: Stainless steel and either smooth or with a threaded section at the end or in the middle, depending on if the pin comes out of one or both sides of the limb.
- Connecting bars: Stainless steel, titanium, acrylic. These can be placed on one side, both sides or multiple positions around the limb.
- Pin gripping / connecting clamps. These rigidly connect the transfixation pins to the connecting bar.

The principle of an external fixator is to place metal transfixation pins into the bone fragments above and below a fracture and then fasten them to a connecting bar on the outside of the skin. Pins are placed through safe corridors avoiding large muscle masses, nerves and blood vessels.

The weight of the patient is taken by the proximal (upper) fracture fragment and is then transferred through the transfixation pins in this fragment to the connecting bar. The connecting bar by-passes the fracture by passing the weight of the patient to the distal (lower) fracture fragment via the transfixation pins in this fragment.

We monitor fracture healing by repeating the post-operative x-rays. Once fracture healing is complete, we can remove the transfixation pins from the bone. Sometimes we do a staged removal. By removing only some of the transfixation pins we can gradually increase the stresses at the fracture site, allowing it to increase in strength while still providing some protection.

Our animal patients are extremely adaptable. While the frame appears big and cumbersome on the outside of the limb, and the transfixation pins poke out through the skin, they are well tolerated by most patients.

For more information or to discuss this surgery in more detail with one of our veterinary surgeons please contact us at the practice on 015394 88555 or visit the referrals section of our website at www.oakhillvetgroup.co.uk

What is included?

At Oakhill Vets we strive to ensure our orthopaedic surgeries are 'all inclusive' and so INCLUDE the following:

- Prehabilitation consultation in our state-of-the-art Animal Rehabilitation Centre (ARC)
- Pre-anaesthetic blood screen
- Hospitalisation (up 24 hours)*
- Intravenous fluids during the anaesthetic and surgery
- General Anaesthesia / Sedation
- Surgery (including implants)*
- Post-operative medication (for up to three weeks)
- 24-hour post-operative laser / cold-pack treatment / physiotherapy
- Week one post-operative rehabilitation consultation and rehabilitation plan (in the ARC)

*Fractures are often injuries caused by severe trauma and so are commonly not found in isolation. Fractures are rarely immediately life threatening and so it is important that a thorough assessment of the patient is made before embarking on fracture fixation surgery. The cost of fracture repair by ESF does not include stabilisation of the patient and/or treatment of other injuries, which may require additional diagnostics, treatments and/or prolonged hospitalisation.

Complications and what is not included?

Post-operative x-rays are advised around 6-8 weeks post-operatively. These are not included in the price of the surgery. ESF post-operative complications are common, but often manageable. While we endeavour to give you an up-front, all-inclusive estimate, when it comes to pets recovering from ESF surgery, there is unfortunately an element of unpredictability. Treatments not included because of unexpected complications include (but are not limited to):

- ESF specific: pin loosening, pin tract sepsis, osteomyelitis, and non-union
- Self-trauma by pet to surgical site and to ESF components
- Post-operative wound infection
- Post-operative fracture complications

Rehabilitation

We strongly advise rehabilitation in our Animal Rehabilitation Centre (ARC) following this surgery. We offer patients that have had surgery at Oakhill an amazing and heavily discounted 12-week post-operative rehabilitation package. Please see our ARC price list for details.

Payment Options

Payment is expected in full at the time of consultation or upon discharge from Oakhill Vets. If your pet is insured we would request that you pay for their treatment and claim the funds back from your insurance company. Once you have settled the cost of any treatment we can help you complete your insurance claim form(s) at no additional charge. Direct claims may be arranged with some insurance companies and are subject to a check with our referral coordinators prior to your appointment. An administration fee is chargeable each time a direct claim is carried out by our referral coordinators. If you have any concerns about payment then please contact us prior to your consultation.

Why choose Oakhill Veterinary Referrals?

Oakhill Vets is based in Windermere in the beautiful Lake District. We are happy to take referrals from clients further afield. Let our friendly, highly skilled and experienced team of Veterinary Surgeons and Registered Veterinary Nurses look after your pet while you relax and enjoy a short break in The Lakes. For more details please phone the practice and speak to one of our helpful referral coordinators on 015394 88555.