

➤ RADIOLOGY QUIZ

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PROBLEM



➤ A 19-year-old woman presents to your urgent care center with a 3-week history of severe pain on the bottom of her right foot. She reports pain on direct palpation of the first metatarsal phalangeal joint and denies any history of trauma or injury to the foot. How would you interpret these views of her foot?

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ANSWER



➔ These radiographs reveal a nondisplaced fracture through the lateral sesamoid of the first digit. Sesamoid fractures are uncommon and usually the result of direct trauma, crushing injuries to the foot, or (most likely in this case) acute avulsion forces from hyperdorsiflexion. A comparison radiograph of the opposite foot should be obtained to distinguish the fracture from a bipartite sesamoid.

For this patient, treatment consisted of oral narcotic analgesia and use of an orthopedic walking boot for 4 weeks. Fractures may take 6 to 12 months to heal completely in resistant cases.¹ If pain persists after conservative management, surgical excision of the sesamoid may be necessary.

REFERENCE

1. Greene W, Griffin LY. *Essentials of Musculoskeletal Care*. 3rd ed. Rosemont, IL: The American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons; 2005:643.

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