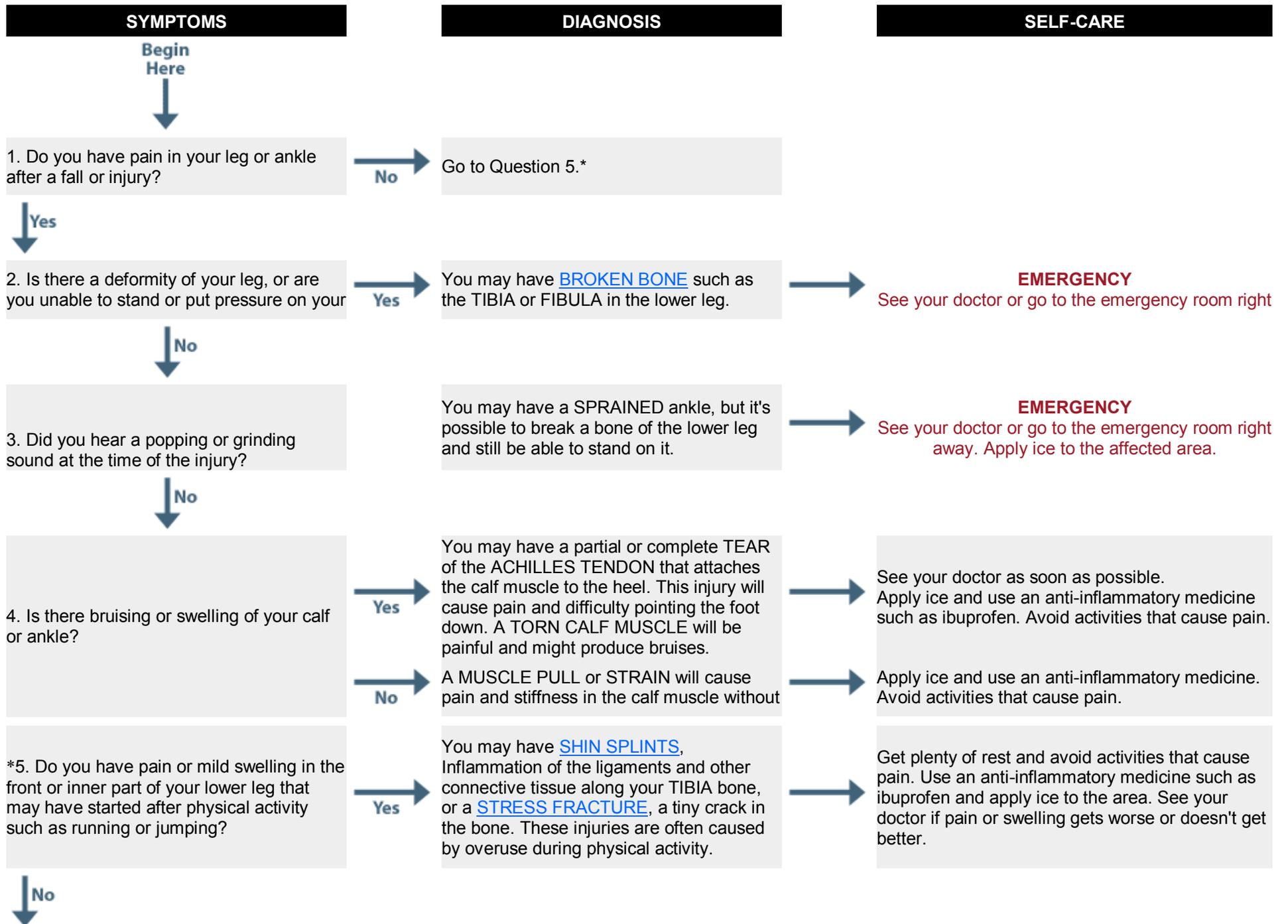


# Leg Problems

Follow this chart for more information about pain and swelling in your legs.



6. Do you have pain, swelling, redness or warmth in your calf?

Yes →

You may have **DEEP VENOUS THROMBOSIS**, a clot in the veins of the calf muscles, often caused by prolonged inactivity.

→

**EMERGENCY**  
See your doctor or go to the emergency room right away. A blood clot in the legs could break away and block an artery in the lungs, causing pulmonary embolism.

↓ No

7. Do you have twisted dark blue or purple veins near the surface of the skin of your calf, and do you have pain or cramping in your calf or leg that is worse after standing

Yes →

You may have **VARICOSE VEINS**, swollen veins caused by weak valves and vein walls.

→

Wear support stockings or hose. Alternate periods of standing with sitting. See your doctor if the varicose veins are very prominent, or if they become painful and red.

↓ No

8. Do you have a tender red area or a red streak anywhere on your leg?

Yes →

You may have an infection such as **CELLULITIS** (infection of the skin), **LYMPHANGITIS** (infection of the lymph channels leading to lymph nodes) or **OSTEOMYELITIS** (infection of the bone).

→

Apply mild heat and an antibiotic ointment. Call your doctor if you have a fever or if the red areas or pain get worse or do not go away.

↓ No

9. Do your calves ache after walking, and is the pain relieved with rest?

Yes →

The pain may be caused by **CLAUDICATION** caused by **PERIPHERAL ARTERIAL DISEASE (PAD)**, narrowing of the arteries that carry blood to your leg muscles.

→

See your doctor as soon as possible.

↓ No

10. Do you have swelling in both of your feet or lower legs?

Yes →

You may have **EDEMA**, a build-up of fluids that may be caused from **HEART FAILURE**, **KIDNEY DISEASE** or blockage of blood returning to the heart.

→

See your doctor as soon as possible.

↓ No

For more information, please talk to your doctor. If you think the problem is serious, call your doctor right away.

*This tool has been reviewed by doctors and is for general educational purposes only. It is not a substitute for medical advice. The information in this tool should not be relied upon to make decisions about your health. Always consult your family doctor with questions about your individual condition(s) and/or circumstances. Source: American Academy of Family Physicians. Family Health & Medical Guide. Dallas: Word Publishing; 1996.*