

Low-intensity pulsed ultrasound to promote healing of delayed-union and non-union fractures

Information for the public

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There is not much good evidence about how well this procedure works for fractures (broken bones) that haven't healed. There are no serious concerns about its safety. This procedure can be used, but only when patients are having regular checks to see how well it is working.

Fractures can take many months to heal. When a bone fails to heal this is called a 'non-union'. A 'delayed-union' is when the bone takes longer than usual to heal. This procedure involves daily treatment (usually for about 15 to 20 minutes), using an ultrasound probe that is placed on the skin at the site of the fracture. The aim is to encourage healing, by stimulating bone cells to grow and repair.

NICE's information on [interventional procedures guidance](#) has more about what a procedure is and how we assess them.

Is this procedure right for me?

If you've been offered this procedure, your healthcare professionals should discuss with you what is involved, and tell you about the risks and benefits. They should talk with you about your options, and listen carefully to your views and concerns. Your family can be involved too, if you wish. All of this should happen before you agree (consent) to have the procedure. You should also be told how to find more information about the procedure. Read more about [making decisions about your care](#).

Some questions to think about

- What does the procedure involve?
- What are the possible benefits? How likely am I to get them?
- What are the risks or side effects? How likely are they?
- What happens if the procedure doesn't work or something goes wrong?
- What happens if I don't want the procedure? Are there other treatments available?

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