

## Low Energy Pilon Fractures What Should I Do?

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Medicine  
RA Cowley Shock Trauma Center

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## Pilon Fractures

- Even "low energy" pilons require relatively high energy mechanism to produce injury pattern
- If swelling permits, may be advantageous to fix early
  - Fracture fragments more mobile
  - Simpler patterns
  - Decreased tourniquet time and "struggle" factor
- If any doubt, temporizing ex-fix still prudent
- If transferring, ex-fix or splint appropriate
- Avoidance of complications key

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## Low Energy Pilon Fractures: Key Points

- Go small when you can
  - Fragment-specific approaches
  - Consider postero-medial vs postero-lateral approach
  - Mini-frag fixation
  - "Antagonistic buttress plating" as opposed to locked plating
- Go big when you have to
  - Meta-diaphyseal comminution
  - Less common for "low energy" injuries

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### Pilon Fractures: Early Fixation, Go Small

- 54 yo female
- MVC
- Multiple injuries, including left talus, right pilon, CHI

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### Low Energy Pilon: Early Fixation



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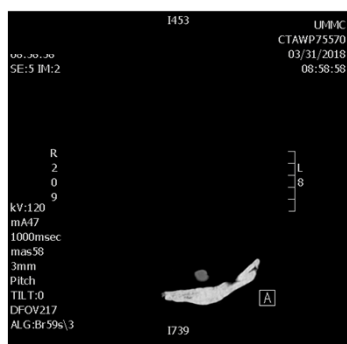
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### Low Energy Pilon: Early Fixation



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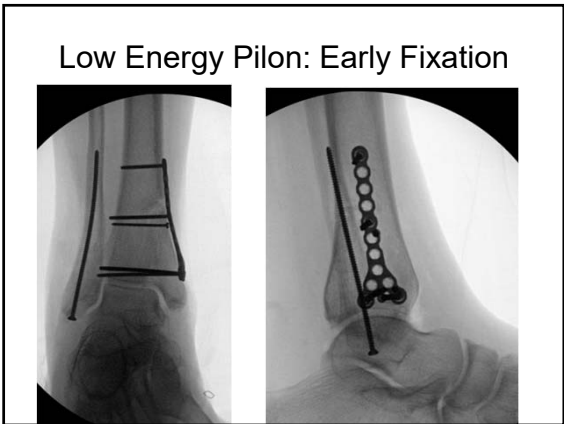
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Pilon Fractures: Early Fixation, Go Small

- 34 yo female
- MVC
- Low energy pilon, ipsilateral talus

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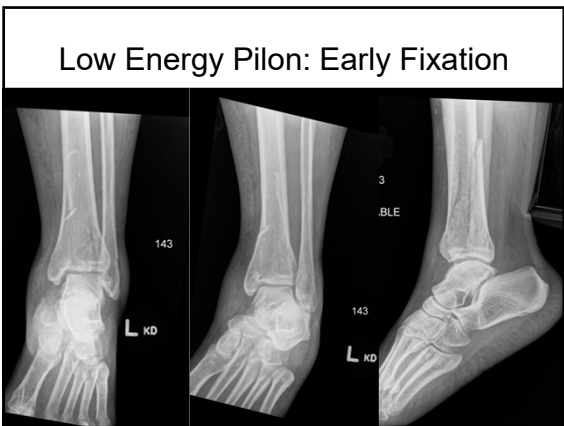
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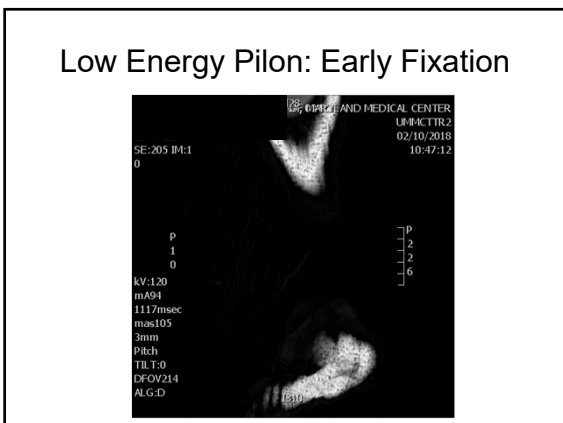
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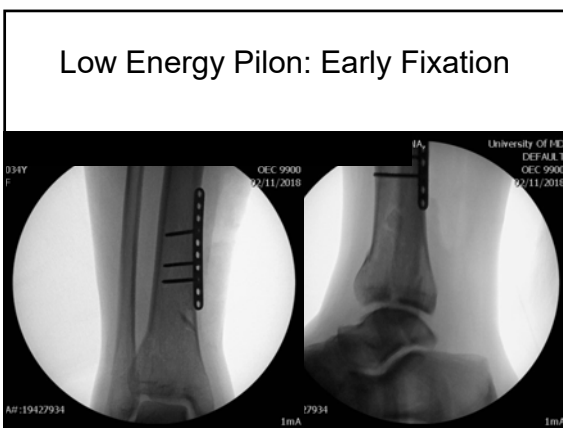
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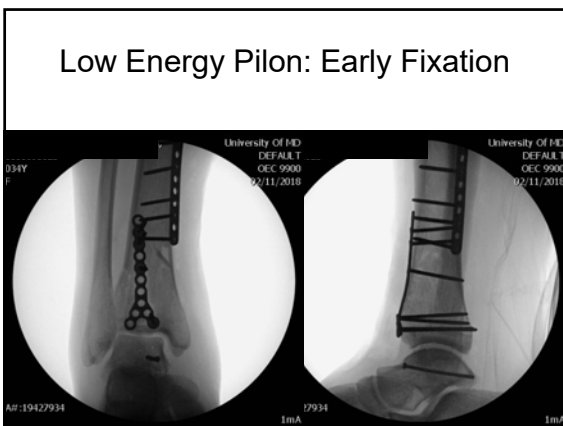
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### Low Energy Pilon: Early Fixation



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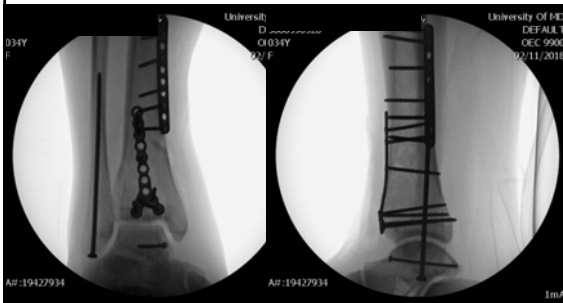
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### Low Energy Pilon: Early Fixation



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### Pilon Fractures: Postero-Medial Approach

- Easy approach
- Can subluxate posterior tib tendon and retract with K-wire
- Supine position
- Further lateral access than expected
- Access to articular impaction within posterior fragment

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**Pilon Fractures: Postero-Medial Approach**

- 58 year old male
- MVC
- Pilon + tibial shaft

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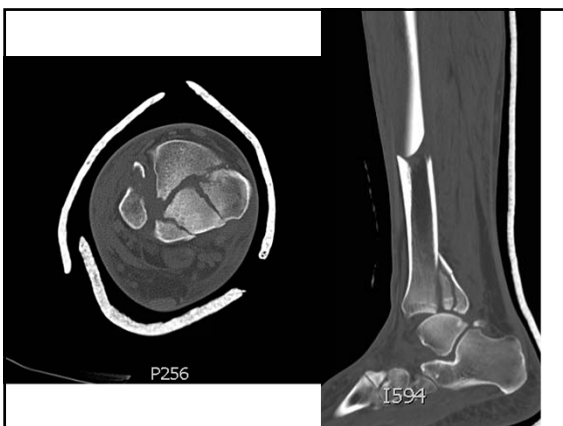
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### Pilon Fractures: Postero-Medial Approach

- Temporizing external fixation
- Staged ORIF after 2 weeks
- Supine position
- Multiple fragment-specific approaches, including posteromedial

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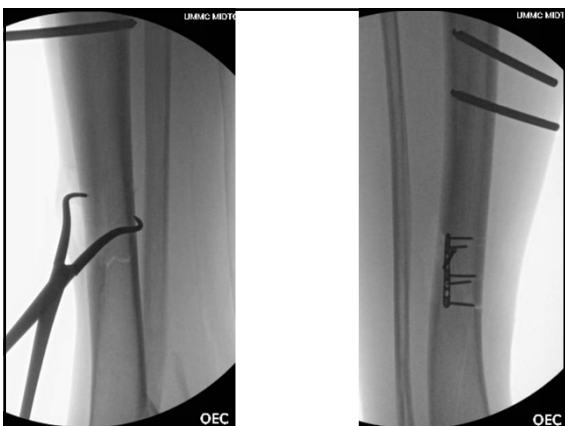
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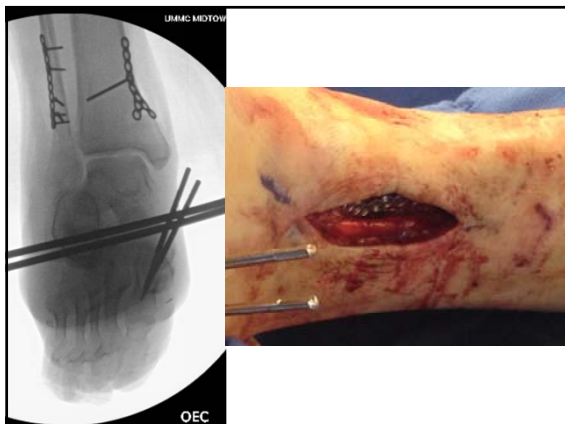
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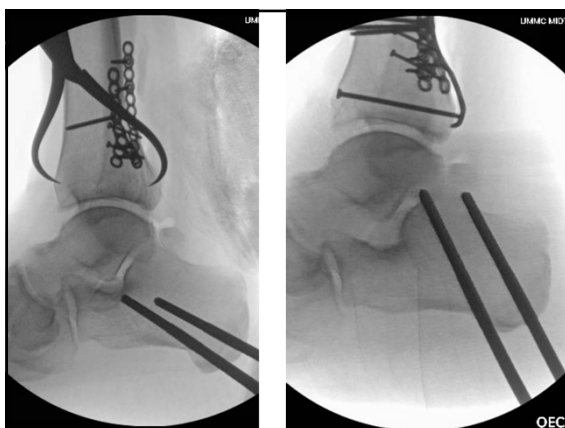
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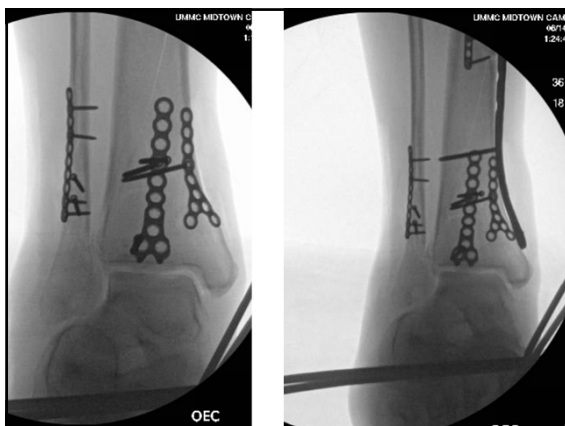
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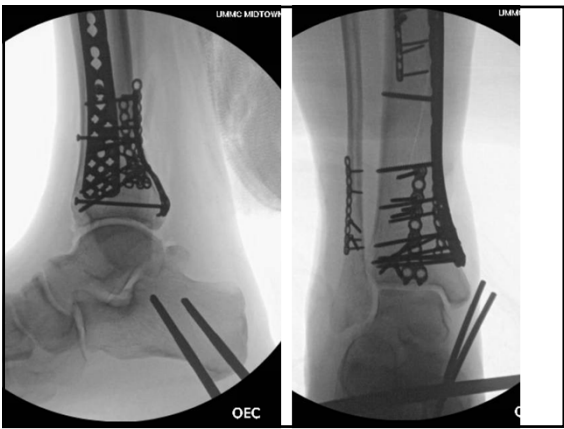
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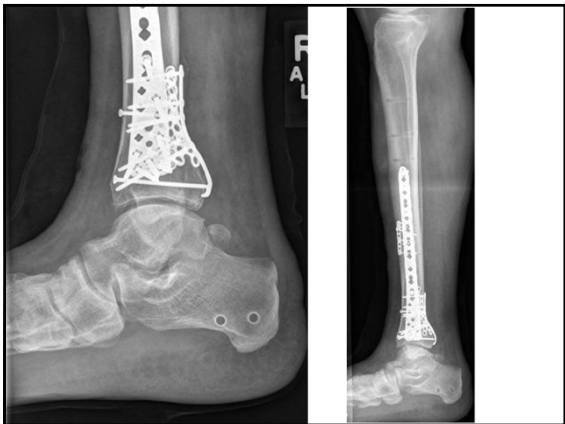
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**Pilon Fractures: Go Big (if you have to)**

- 52 yo Hispanic male longshoreman
- Fell from container to deck of ship

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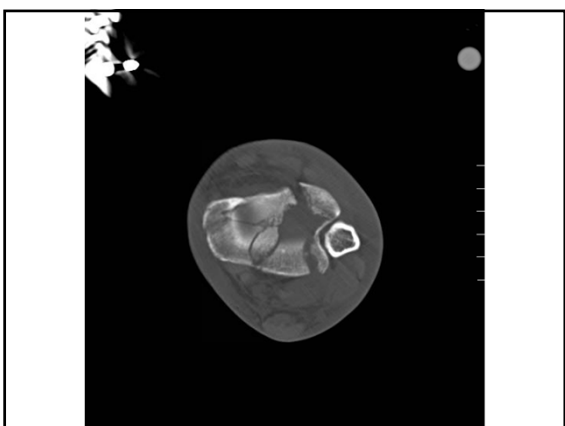
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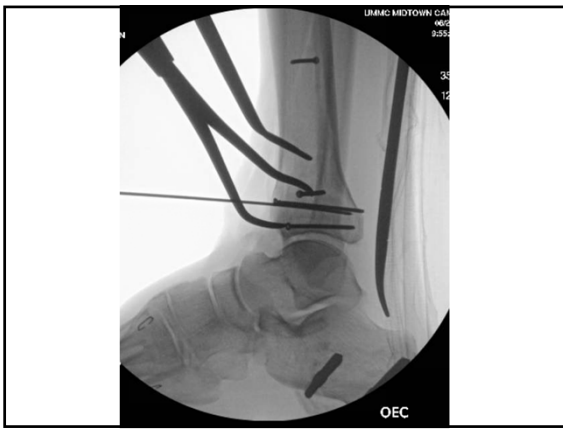
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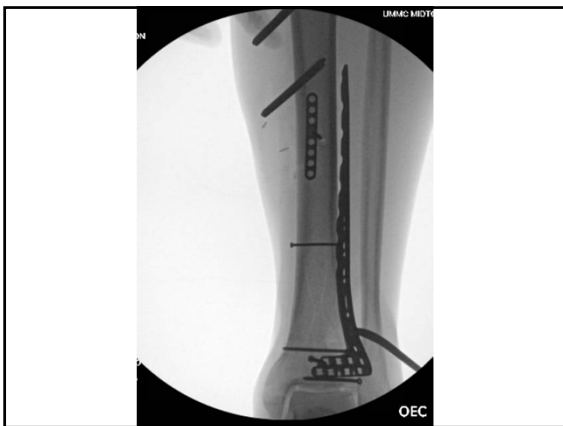
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**Thank  
You!**

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