Low Energy Pilon Fractures
What Should I Do?

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Pilon Fractures
• Even “low energy” pions 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

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
Pilon Fractures: Early Fixation, Go Small

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

Low Energy Pilon: Early Fixation

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Pilon Fractures: Early Fixation, Go Small

- 34 yo female
- MVC
- Low energy pilon, ipsilateral talus
Low Energy Pilon: Early Fixation

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Low Energy Pilon: Early Fixation
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
Pilon Fractures: Postero-Medial Approach

- 58 year old male
- MVC
- Pilon + tibial shaft
Pilon Fractures: Postero-Medial Approach

- Temporizing external fixation
- Staged ORIF after 2 weeks
- Supine position
- Multiple fragment-specific approaches, including posteromedial
Pilon Fractures: Go Big (if you have to)
- 52 yo Hispanic male longshoreman
- Fell from container to deck of ship
Thank You!