

**Introduction:** The National Football League (NFL) has increasingly emphasized player safety in recent years. Long bone fractures represent significant musculoskeletal injuries and frequently result in prolonged absence from competition. The purpose of this study was to identify long bone fractures during the 2024–2025 and 2025–2026 NFL seasons and evaluate patterns by fracture type, extremity, player position, playing surface, and timing within the season.

**Methods:** Publicly available NFL and team-specific injury reports from the 2024–2025 and 2025–2026 seasons were reviewed. Fractures involving long bones of the upper and lower extremities, including the clavicle, were included. Injuries were categorized by extremity, player position, playing surface, and timing within the season (Week 1 through postseason). Injuries reported as fractures without specific bone designation were included. Ligamentous injuries, dislocations, and fractures involving short, flat, or irregular bones were excluded.

**Results:** Across the two seasons, 92 long bone fractures were identified across 570 games, corresponding to an incidence of 0.16 fractures per game (one fracture every 6.2 games). Fibula fractures were the most common (30, 32.6%), followed by hand (15, 16.3%) and foot fractures (14, 15.2%). Lower extremity fractures accounted for 53 injuries (57.6%), while upper extremity fractures accounted for 39 (42.4%). Offensive players sustained 53 fractures (57.6%), compared with 39 (42.4%) among defensive players. Fractures occurred at similar rates on artificial turf (51%) and natural grass (45%). Most fractures occurred during games (85, 92%), with 7 (8%) during practice. Fifty-three fractures (58%) occurred during Week 9 or later.

**Conclusion:** Lower extremity fractures accounted for most injuries, with fibula fractures most common. Most fractures occurred during game play and in the second half of the season, with similar incidence between playing surfaces. Further investigation into injury mechanisms and return-to-play timelines may help better characterize their impact on NFL athletes.

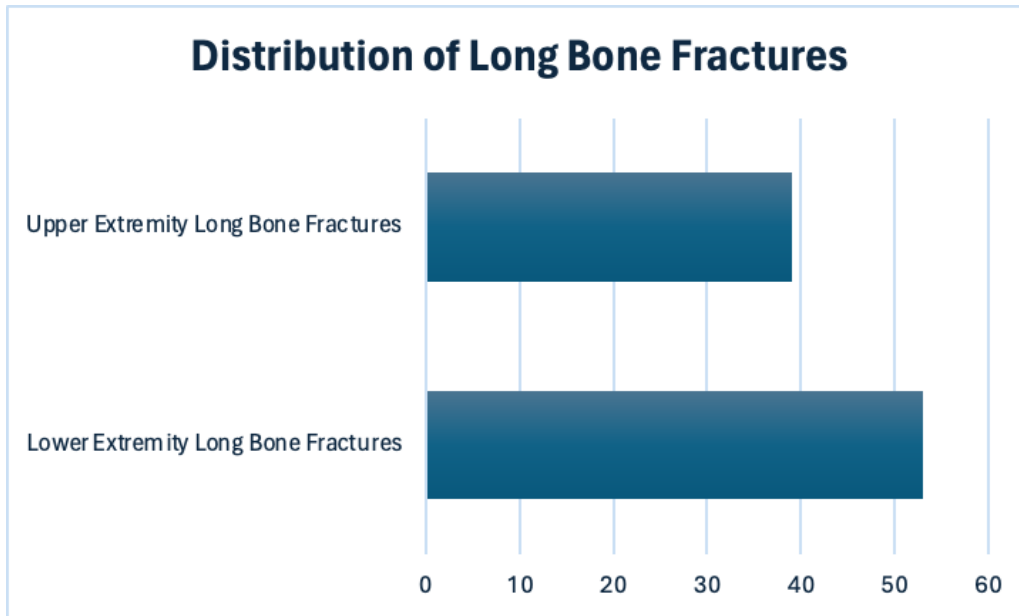


Figure 1. Incidence of lower extremity versus upper extremity long bone fractures during the 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 NFL seasons.

Fracture Type	Offense	Defense	Total
Clavicle	8	2	10
Humerus	0	1	1
Forearm	4	4	8
Wrist	3	2	5
Hand	11	4	15
Femur	0	1	1
Tibia	2	4	6
Fibula*	15	15	30
Foot	8	6	14
Unspecified Leg	2	0	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>92</b>

Table 1. Distribution of long bone fracture type by player position (offense vs defense) during the 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 NFL seasons.

\*Fibula category includes isolated fibula fractures and ankle fractures in which the specific bone involved was not specified.