

## CHAPTER 20

# Extremities trauma

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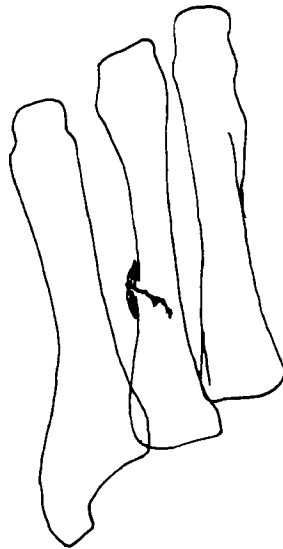
## Introduction

### **Importance of radiographs**

The primary aim is to diagnose the presence of a fracture or dislocation. It is also important to assess the position of the bone ends before and after treatment. Follow-up radiographs are subsequently needed for bony union and complications.

### **Principles of radiographic examination**

- It is essential to take radiographs in at least 2 planes, preferably at right angles to each other. This will ensure that a fracture will not be missed and the bony alignment can be accurately assessed.
- The joint above and below the fracture should be included in the radiograph. This is to assess for associated dislocation especially in paired bones such as those in the forearm and leg.
- Due to bone resorption, a fracture line will become more visible about 2 weeks after an injury. Callus formation may also be present. Hence serial examinations may be required if a fracture is clinically suspected but is not visible immediately after injury (fig 20.1).



**Fig 20.1**

Callus formation is seen around a stress fracture of the 4<sup>th</sup> metatarsal bone.