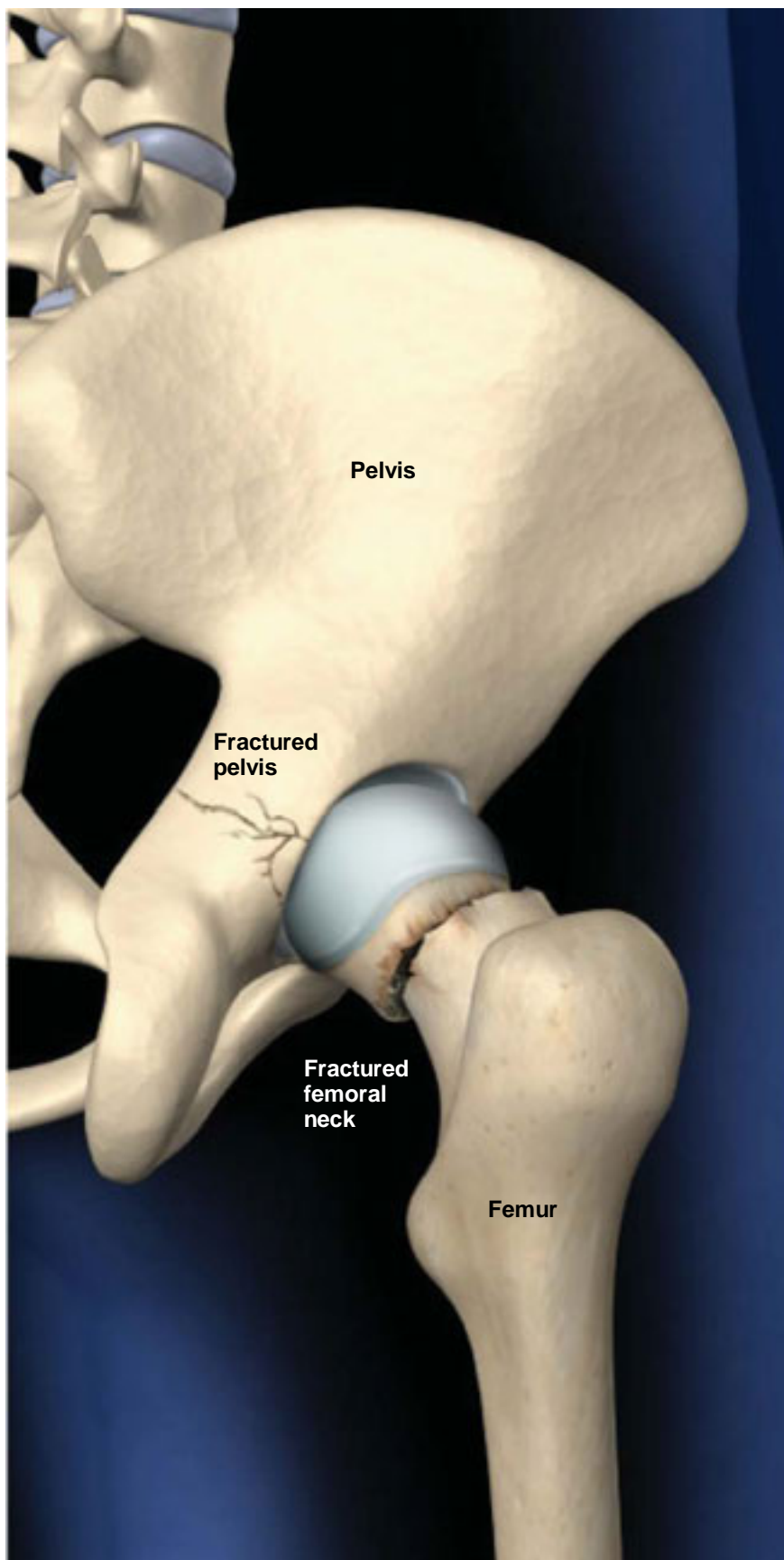


HIP FRACTURES



Overview

A fracture of the hip is a serious injury that most commonly affects the elderly. A hip fracture usually refers to a break of the head or neck of the femur, but it can also refer to a break of the pelvis, which contains the hip socket.

Causes

In the elderly, hip fractures are most often caused by a combination of weakened bones and a traumatic injury such as a fall. The elderly are susceptible to fractures because bones tend to lose density and strength with age, a condition known as osteoporosis. Hip fractures can also occur in young people as a result of severe trauma.

Symptoms

Symptoms include severe pain in the hip, bruising and swelling in the hip and groin, inability to bear weight on the injured leg, a shortened leg, and an outward turning of the injured leg.

Treatment

Fractured hips are almost always treated with surgery. Surgical options may include screws or plates to hold the bones together, an intramedullary rod, a hemiarthroplasty, or a total hip replacement, in which the hip is replaced with implants.