Lateral ankle sprains are extremely common injuries that heal without any residual long term sequelae in the vast majority of patients. Occult fractures of the ankle and hindfoot on the other hand are rare and thus commonly misdiagnosed as ankle sprains; particularly so, as they can be difficult to diagnose with plain radiographs. They are a major source of prolonged disability however and in some instances delayed treatment can result in significant long term disability for the patient. When evaluating a patient with a presumed acute ankle sprain or residual pain after such an injury it is therefore important to be aware of the many occult fractures around the ankle and hindfoot and their management.

This symposium presentation will outline a number of these occult fractures, such as lateral talar process fracture, medial and lateral tubercle of the posterior talar process fracture, posterior talar body fracture, talar head fracture, fractures involving the middle facet of the subtalar joint, anterior process of the calcaneus fracture, and medial malleolar, lateral malleolar, and distal tibial stress or insufficiency fractures. Exemplary cases will be presented emphasizing the importance of a thorough history (including the mechanism of injury), focused physical examination, and high index of suspicion in order to make these, sometimes difficult diagnosis.