

Clinical Protocol

Patient Discharge Advice Sheet

Cast Care

- The cast must be kept dry or it will crack or crumble. Moisture may also cause soreness of the skin or could lead to wound infection
- Pillows, blankets or towels can be used to elevate the casted limb, especially during the first 24 hours and preferably for a few days afterwards
- Do not stick any object under the cast. This may injure the skin. In case of severe itching underneath the cast, use your finger only to rub the skin gently or use a hairdryer SET ON COOL to blow air into the cast.
- Sponge baths may be used instead of shower or tub baths. Use plastic wrap to protect the cast. Be sure not to get the cast wet.
- Follow your doctor's instructions regarding activities, weight bearing and use of walking aids. A plaster cast takes 12-48 hours to dry and a synthetic fibreglass cast dries in 5 – 30 minutes. For weight bearing cast, you must wait until the cast is completely dry before weight bearing.
- For small children, be careful that no small toys or food crumbs slip down inside the cast.
- A cast that is too tight can compromise the blood or nerve supply to the limb. Signs of decreased circulation are numbness, tingling, burning sensation, change in colour i.e. bluish or pale, swelling that is not relieved by elevating the limb and severe increasing pain that is not relieved by medication. Call the Hospital or your doctor if you notice any of these signs.
- The cast will be removed using a small oscillating rotary saw. It will easily cut the cast but will not cut the skin. It is noisy and has lots of vibration.
- After removal of the cast, the casted limb will feel very weak and look thin. Through normal use and exercise, it will return to normal.