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Cast Care

- Please keep your cast clean and dry! When showering, put the affected limb into 2 plastic bags (small-medium garbage bags work well) and wrap a small towel around the upper edge of the cast. Tie the bags around the towel using elastic, string, etc (an old pair of pantyhose works particularly well for this). Keep the shower as quick as possible, trying to keep the affected limb out of the direct stream of water; the towel will usually catch any moisture that otherwise would have gotten into the cast.
- Elevate the extremity frequently for the first few days. Elevation above the level of your heart works best for bringing down swelling.
- Exercise your fingers and toes; this also helps to reduce swelling.
- For uncomfortable itching, you may use a hairdryer set on “cool” and blow cool air into the ends of the cast. Please do not ever stick anything down into the cast!!! Foreign objects in the cast will cause more skin irritation and could break the skin.
- If the cast develops rough edges, an emery board can be used to lightly sand them down. Moleskin can also be used on edges of the cast where the skin is irritated.
- Do not bear weight in your cast unless your physician has cleared you to do so.

Please call your doctor if...

- There is extreme pain not relieved by moderate use of pain medication
- There is pain or persistent rubbing at one point under the cast (may indicate a pressure sore)
- Cast tightness, or numbness and tingling that is not relieved by elevation of the extremity above the level of your heart for at least a half hour.
- Discoloration of the fingers/toes
- Breakage, destruction or wetness of the cast (do NOT attempt to remove the cast yourself!)
- Excessive itching or skin irritation inside the cast. (again, do NOT ever place any objects down into the cast)

Types of Cast and Splint Material:

Fiberglass: This product is lighter and more durable than plaster. Although it hardens in 20 minutes, care should be taken for the first few hours not to rest it on a hard surface as this could create a dent.

Plaster: This is sometimes during the very early stages of an injury, or after surgery. Usually, the plaster is held in place by a combination of cast padding and ACE bandages. Although it begins to harden immediately, it takes several hours to set completely.