



POP / Cast Care

Introduction

This leaflet has been produced to give general information for patients (or carers of a patient) with a lower limb cast. Most of your questions should be answered by the Cast Care Advice sheet which should be enclosed with your/the patient's documents.

Cast care information

1. A Plaster of Paris cast takes 48 hours to dry.
2. A synthetic cast takes one hour to dry.
3. Casts must be kept dry at all times.
4. Elevation is important to reduce swelling.
5. Leg casts must not be walked on unless told to do so. (If you/the patient are able to walk with this cast, please ensure you/the patient wear the shoe provided.)
6. Movement of joints and digits (toes, knees and hips) for 5 minutes in every waking hour is extremely important. Please read specific cast care advice sheet enclosed with patient documentation.
7. Do not poke anything down the cast as this may cause a sore.

Complications that may occur whilst in a cast

If any of the following occur contact the Fracture Clinic medical staff. In an emergency when the clinic is closed, contact the Accident and Emergency department.

1. Increased pain that is not helped by pain relief and rest. Any pain in the calf.
2. Swelling, numbness, blueness, paleness or discolouration which is not bruising.



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3. Pins and needles.
4. You/the patient is unable to move your/their toes/knee if not in cast.
5. You/the patient feel a burning sensation under the cast as this could be a blister or sore.
6. Any discharge or smells which come through the cast.
7. An object gets dropped down the cast.
8. The cast becomes loose or tight.

Treatment to reduce the risk of thrombosis (blood clots) of the lower leg.

To reduce the risk of thrombosis (blood clots) in the deep veins, mostly in the lower leg or in the lungs (pulmonary embolism), you will have been given the option of two treatments for blood thinning to reduce the risk of a blood clot developing.

Orthopaedic/fracture clinic staff to complete:

Subcutaneous Injection – Dalteparin (Fragmin)	YES/NO
Capsule – Dabigatran	YES/NO

If you do develop cramps, calf pain or swelling, breathlessness or chest pain, please contact the hospital urgently.

Check list for patients with a lower limb cast

1. Leg to be elevated on pillows higher than the height of your/the patient's heart (2-3 pillows required). Pillows to be placed under thigh and calf (not under heel), to prevent pressure on the heel. Heels should not be rested directly onto the bed.
2. When you/ the patient is seated in a wheelchair/chair, the leg should still be elevated on a stool with a pillow placed under the calf to protect the heel from pressure.



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- Please check the top and bottom of the cast daily for any redness, undue swelling, blistering or broken skin. Report to the Fracture Clinic immediately if any smells or staining come through the cast.

Removable casts with velcro straps

Orthopaedic/fracture clinic staff to complete:

Can the cast be removed daily for hygiene and skin check?	YES/NO
Can the cast be removed for exercises?	YES/NO
Can the cast be removed to have a bath or shower?	YES/NO
Was the skin intact prior to cast application?	YES/NO
Is there a sore, wound or suture present?	YES/NO
If the answer to the previous question is YES Is a district nurse required?	YES/NO
Has this been arranged?	YES/NO
Has the home been contacted and verbal information given about the patient's treatment and care?	YES/NO/NOT APPLICABLE