Care of plaster casts
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Your cast may be made out of Plaster of Paris or a synthetic material. The following advice is applicable to both types.

It is important that you eat a healthy diet and drink plenty of fluids to help with bone and wound healing whilst you are in a cast.

Please help us by looking after your plaster. It is an essential part of your treatment. We hope that the following will help you:

Do

- Exercise joints not held in the plaster as much as possible.
- Do not let your limb hang down unless it is being used. **Elevate the limb**, especially during the first 2 weeks.
- Use sticks, crutches or frame as instructed. Please return equipment when it is no longer needed.
- Keep your plaster completely dry.
- Wear the shoe provided if you are allowed to weight bear on the plaster.
- Take advice before driving.
- Take advice before flying or travelling.

Please contact us if you have any worries.

Do not

- Interfere with your plaster in any way.
- Poke anything down your plaster.
- Write on your plaster of Paris for 48 hours after it has been applied.
- Write on your synthetic plaster for 2 hours after it has been applied.
- Leave your limb unsupported or stand for long periods.
■ Stand or put weight on your plastered limb unless instructed by the doctor, nurse or physiotherapist.
■ Cut your plaster.
■ Sit too close to a fire, as your plaster may become hot and burn you.
■ Get the plaster wet. It may disintegrate or cause skin problems.
■ Do Not smoke as smoking slows down bone healing.

Please ring us if your plaster:

■ Rubs.
■ Cracks.
■ Itches excessively.
■ Softens.
■ Becomes loose or uncomfortable.

Please ring first then return to the hospital immediately (or if out of hours attend the Emergency Department) if the following occurs:

■ Your toes or fingers become blue, pale or discoloured.
■ Sudden increase in swelling, numbness or pins and needles.
■ Your limb becomes more painful.
■ You feel “pins and needles” or numbness.
■ You have a blisterlike pain or rubbing under the plaster.
■ You have discharge, wetness or smell under your cast.
■ You drop any object down inside your cast.

Remember
If you have any problems or concerns about your plaster, please do not hesitate to contact the staff.
Reference

NHS Constitution. Information on your rights and responsibilities. Available at www.nhs.uk/aboutnhs/constitution
If you or the individual you are caring for need support reading this leaflet please ask a member of staff for advice.

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