

Cast Care Instructions

Casts are still a tried and true method for the treatment of broken bones as well as many other injuries. They are used frequently reconstructive surgery. Simple cast care instructions are important to prevent problems. These are only guidelines and any questions should be directed to your physician.

During the first 24-48 hours you may experience some **swelling**.

- Elevation of your cast above your heart will help prevent or decrease swelling.
- Ice in a dry plastic bag or a flexible ice pack may be helpful.
- Full motion of the uninjured fingers, from full extension to full flexion (fist) will help.

Contact your physician **immediately** if:

- You have increased pain or swelling.
- You have numbness or tingling in you hand.
- There is bleeding or drainage from the cast.
- You have fever or chills.
- You lose of active motion of your fingers.

Contact your physician if:

- You experience any skin irritation related to the cast.
- There is damage to the cast.
- The cast feels loose.
- You experience burning or stinging.

Caring for your cast

- Keep clean and dry
 - Use a plastic cover for the cast, big plastic baggies (from newspaper, bread, trash etc) with large rubber band (#32, from office supply store)
 - Commercially available watertight protectors are available from surgical supply stores/harmacies or online approximately \$25 including delivery). These come in sizes adult hand, adult short arm (below elbow) and long arm (above elbow).
- If the cast padding gets damp try a hairdryer on cold/no heat, if unrelieved notify your doctor
- Never place anything inside your cast, such as a hanger or ruler to scratch an itch
- Small amounts of Gold Bond powder can be used for itching if there are no open wounds or exposed pins.
- Inspect the skin around the edges of your cast. If the skin becomes red or raw around the cast notify your doctor.
- Do not alter your cast

Cast removal

- Never remove the cast yourself
- The cast will be removed with a vibrating saw. The saw blade does not rotate.
- The cast padding helps protect you.
- You may feel the vibration
- Cast saws make a lot of noise and may feel “hot” from friction but will not harm you. (Its bark is worse than its bite)

