

When You Come Out of Plaster: Lower Limb (Leg)

Summary Points to Remember

- Swelling, pain and stiffness are normal after removal of plaster cast
- Your physiotherapist will let you know how much weight you can safely put through your leg

Skin Care

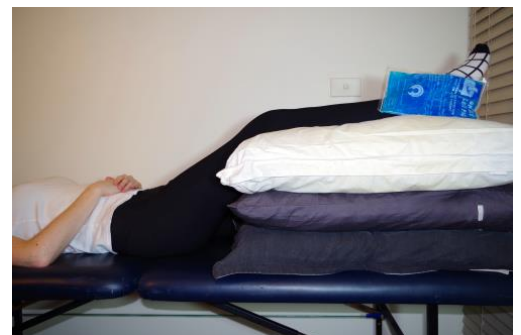
- The skin that was under the plaster will likely be dry and flaky for a few days – this is normal. Wash your leg with mild soap and warm water
- Massage your whole leg/foot with moisturiser (e.g. sorbolene, vitamin E cream or olive oil) morning and night to help with circulation and pain sensitivity
- Keep wound dressings clean and dry.

Pain

- It is normal to have some pain when starting to use your leg again
- If pain is bothering you, medications such as paracetamol or anti-inflammatories can help. Speak to your local doctor or pharmacist before starting any new medication
- Gentle movement, and using a warm or cold pack may help.

Swelling

- Swelling can cause pain, pins and needles or numbness
- To improve swelling:
 - Elevate your leg regularly above your heart using 2 – 3 pillows as pictured
 - Wiggle your toes and move your ankle up and down to assist with fluid movement
 - Apply an ice pack for 20 minutes 3 – 4 times per day as required
 - In some cases an elastic compression bandage may help
- If your symptoms do not ease using the above techniques seek further advice from your treating physiotherapist or local doctor.



Joint Stiffness

- It is normal for a joint to be stiff after wearing a plaster cast
- Gentle movement, exercise and warmth can help
- Your physiotherapist will give you exercises to assist in improving your movement.

Muscle Wasting

- It is normal for muscle size and strength to decrease after wearing a plaster cast – your leg may feel weak
- Your physiotherapist will give you exercises to assist you in improving your strength when safe to do so.

Camboot

- You may be fitted with a camboot after the removal of your plaster cast
The camboot can be removed for hygiene and exercises (unless otherwise specified by your orthopaedic doctor or physiotherapist).

Expected Return to Daily Activities

- When allowed to weight bear it may take a few days before you feel comfortable putting weight on your leg – start with a little bit of weight (use crutches if needed) and increase as directed by your physiotherapist
- **Return to driving**
 - You are not allowed to use your injured leg to drive while wearing a plaster or camboot
 - Ask your doctor or physiotherapist when you can remove the boot and drive – they will check if you are safe by testing your movement and strength
 - Discuss any concerns with your doctor and/or insurance company
- **Return to work**
 - Most people are able to return to work on light or modified duties while their injury is healing
 - Speak to your local doctor and your employer about a return to work plan
- **Return to sport**
 - Speak with your physiotherapist about a guided return to sport program

Contact

Physiotherapy

Allied Health

9342 7440

Practitioner / Patient notes

Physiotherapy Department | iPolicy Number AHPT02.05C | Physiotherapy Outpatient Team Leader | June 2021



MELBOURNE HEALTH

The information contained in this brochure is for educational purposes only and is not intended as a substitute for consultation with a doctor or health care professional