

PLASTER CARE AT HOME

The reason for the plaster is to keep your limb in the right position and to protect the injured area whilst healing occurs. A plaster is sometimes called a cast or plaster cast (all these names mean the same thing). Occasionally there are some complications from the plaster and you need to know what to watch for and when to come back.

Raise or elevate the limb

- In the first few days after discharge from hospital, keep your injured limb raised above the level of the heart and move fingers or toes as much as possible. This will help to reduce the chance of further swelling and assist with pain relief.
- Always use the sling provided to support the arm for the first week. Rest it on pillows when sitting or lying down.
- Encourage plenty of rest in the first few days at home.

Skin care

- Itchiness under the plaster is common. Do not scratch under the plaster with sharp objects as this may cause a scratch or wound which can easily become infected e.g. knitting needles, pens.
- If the plaster develops a strong, awful smell and you develop and or you develop a temperature, this may be a sign of infection.

Cast care

- Keep the plaster dry at all times. When bathing, make sure that the plaster is totally protected with a plastic bag and well sealed at the top with tape.
- Never immerse the limb in the bath or pool.
- The plaster usually takes 2 days to dry properly. During this time you may experience a warm sensation under the plaster.
- Allow the plaster to dry naturally, keep it away from direct heat. Avoid damaging the plaster by resting it on hard surfaces or walking on it, unless otherwise instructed.

Contact your nearest Emergency Department for the following:

- If your plaster cast becomes loose, soft or cracked
- If an object has been pushed under the plaster, a pressure sore may develop.
- If the plaster develops a strong, awful smell and you develop and or you develop a temperature, this may be a sign of infection.

