

# Cast Care

## You have a cast made of plaster or fiberglass

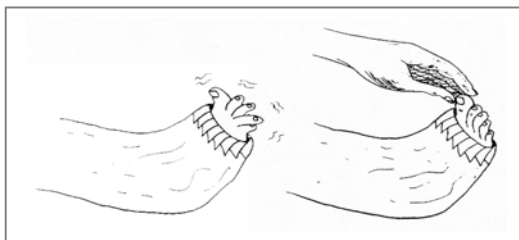
### ***A cast is used:***

- After surgery
- After injury
- To help hold your arm, leg or other body part in position during healing
- For serial casting- to improve the position of your foot leg or arm

The cast might feel a little strange at first, but in a short period of time, you will adjust and feel more comfortable. During the next few days and weeks, the way you take care of your cast will play a big part in how well your arm or leg heals.

### **Do's**

- Do keep the cast dry. Cover the cast with a plastic bag in the rain or snow. If the cast is on your leg, avoid walking in wet grass. If the cast gets wet, contact the clinic as soon as possible to have the cast changed. If your surgical incision gets wet, your cast may need to be changed to prevent infection.
- Do use crutches to walk, if you were instructed to do so by your doctor.
- Do raise (elevate) your casted arm or leg on a pillow, above the level of your heart, whenever possible. This helps reduce swelling.
- Do wiggle your toes or fingers to improve blood flow and reduce swelling. Use a damp, soapy, washcloth to wash fingers and toes, also the skin along the edge of the cast, twice daily. Wash off the soap and dry skin with a towel



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## Don'ts

- Don't walk on the cast if you have been asked not to.
- Don't hit or bang the cast. This could cause the cast to crack or break.
- Don't slide **anything** inside the cast- no coated hangers, pencils, knitting needles. This could cause a serious infection. Use a blow dryer with cool air to relieve the itching.
- Don't use skin lotion or powders around or inside the cast.

## Watch for these signs and call if any of the following occur:

- Increase in pain or swelling
- Swelling that is unrelieved by raising (elevating) the casted arm or leg above the level of the heart for one hour.
- A change in sensation (feeling) such as tingling, numbness, cold
- Fingers/toes change color from pink to dusky blue or white
- Decreased or loss of movement in fingers and toes
- The cast gets wet
- A bad smell is coming from your cast
- A warm area or fresh stain on your cast
- A crack, dent, or soft spot on your cast
- An object was dropped or became stuck to the cast
- Cast tightness, skin redness, or breakdown at the edge of the cast

Parents, please make every effort to keep your child's cast clinic appointment. If you miss the appointment, and treatment is delayed, your child may have to wear the cast longer.

**If you are unable to keep an appointment,  
please notify the clinic to reschedule as soon as possible.  
(916) 453-2180**

