



Children's Health Ireland
at Crumlin

INFORMATION LEAFLETS FOR PARENTS / CARERS OF A CHILD WITH A LEG CAST



INTRODUCTION

Your child's doctor has placed your child's leg in a cast in order to keep it from moving to allow the broken bone to heal. A cast will stabilise and hold bones and joints in place following or a break or surgery until the bone is healed. Your child may also have a cast applied to improve the position of their foot. It is very important that you read and follow the guidelines below.

Caring for your Child's Cast at home:

- When your child is not up and about they should keep their leg raised on a soft surface such as a pillow especially for the first few days. This will help reduce swelling and avoid pain.
- Exercise other joints (not held in cast) as much as possible. This will help reduce stiffness.
- Keep your child's cast clean and dry. If it gets wet, you must contact the hospital for it to be checked.
- **Do not** put anything down the cast if the skin is itchy. This can cause damage to the skin underneath. Your Nurse will guide you on what to do if itching is a problem underneath the cast.
- If your child is allowed put weight on their cast, they will be provided with a cast shoe. The cast shoe must be worn when standing on the cast as it protects the cast and makes it less slippery.
- **Do not** bang or lean or walk on the cast for:
 - 48 hours if it's a Plaster of Paris Cast
 - 1 hour for a Fibreglass cast or Soft cast.
- **Do not** change or alter your child's cast in any way. Please contact the Plaster Nurse if you have any concerns about your child's cast.

Signs and symptoms to observe closely for/ if you notice ANY of the following:

- Swelling of the toes
- If the toes become blue or white.
- Numbness or Pins and Needles in the toes
- Coldness of the toes
- No relief from pain after taking pain relieving medicines.
- Reduced/ No movement in the toes.

Elevate the leg for 30 minutes. If no improvement, report immediately to the Emergency Department.



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If your child complains of calf pain or shortness of breath, you must present to the Emergency Department immediately.

Contact the Plaster Care Nurse on 01 4096100 Bleep 8336 or Voicemail 2412 Monday – Friday between 08:00am- 5:30pm if any of the following occur:

- The cast becomes soft/ cracks/ breaks
- The cast becomes loose or falls off
- The cast becomes uncomfortable
- Objects get stuck inside the cast
- If there is excessive itching or a burning sensation underneath the cast
- Unpleasant smell or discharge coming from the cast
- If you have **any questions Outside of these hours, contact the Emergency Department on 01 4096326.**

Pain and Discomfort:

Your child may experience some discomfort for the first few days. Administer pain relieving medicines if necessary for the first 2-3 days. If pain does not settle with over the counter pain relieving medicines, please present to the **Emergency Department.**

Cast Removal:

- The cast will be removed at the clinic by your healthcare provider or you may be given instructions on how you can remove it at home.
- **Do not** remove your cast at home **unless** you have been instructed to do so.
- Certain casts require a specialised cast saw for them to be removed. It is not painful to do this but the machine is noisy.

Outpatients:

You will be given an appointment if your child needs to return to the Fracture clinic. Your child may need to have X-rays taken, the cast removed or a new cast applied. Therefore, you may be in the department for some time. Please come prepared. Bring along snacks and favorite toys for your child to keep him/ her distracted.

For more information on your child's Leg Cast Care please contact the Orthopaedic Plaster Nurses on:

01 4096100 Bleep 8336 Voicemail 2412

Remember: Ask your nurse if you are unsure about anything about your child's care.

Additional instructions

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