

Children's Services – Information for parents

Looking after your child's plaster cast

A plaster cast has been put onto your child's arm or leg to prevent movement of a broken bone while it heals, or to rest an injured limb or joint.

Occasionally, swelling may occur underneath the plaster cast, causing pain and problems with circulation.

What should I do?

- **Do** keep the affected arm/leg elevated, either in the sling, collar 'n' cuff, or on pillows, as directed by the doctor/nurse. This will boost the blood circulation, and lessen the chance of any swelling.
- **Do** exercise all joints that are not inside the plaster, for example, fingers and toes.
- **Do** carefully wash the skin around the cast daily. Check the skin under the edge of the cast for redness.
- **Do not** allow the plaster to become wet.
- **Do not** put anything inside the cast. This could irritate the skin and cause an infection.
- **Do not** cut the plaster cast. If the cast is uncomfortable, rubbing or digging in, contact the hospital.

What should I look for?

While your child is in plaster, he/she should not feel any pain but may feel uncomfortable.

Give your child paracetamol or ibuprofen as required.

Your child's fingers/toes should be:

- Pink (or normal skin colour)
- Warm
- Pain-free
- Able to move, with no sensation of numbness or 'pins and needles'.

Please contact the hospital immediately for advice if:

- Fingers or toes turn white or blue and feel cold to the touch.
- Fingers or toes become swollen and do not return to normal when the limb is raised.
- Your child complains of feeling pins and needles, numbness or pain.
- There is any oozing or wetness under the cast.
- The cast starts to smell.
- The cast becomes loose, cracks or breaks.

Who shall I contact?

Clinic One (plaster room)	08.30 – 17.00	01223 217772
Emergency Department	24 hours	01223 217119
Ward	24 hours	01223



We are currently working towards a smoke-free site. Smoking is only permitted in the designated smoking areas.

For advice and support in quitting, contact your GP or the free NHS Stop Smoking helpline on 0800 169 0 169

Help with this leaflet:



If you would like this information in another language, large print or audio format, please ask the department to contact Patient Information: 01223 216032 or

patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk



Document history

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