

Taking Care of Your: Waterproof Cast

Waterproof Cast Care

A waterproof cast has been applied to help your broken bone heal properly and in the correct position. It is very important that you are extremely careful during the first 24 to 48 hours. If you have any questions that are not answered on this education handout, please call your doctor.

To allow the cast to work, it is important that you follow these instructions:

1. Do NOT go in a spa-style hot tub or to the beach. Sand and debris may get stuck in the cast and is very irritating to the skin. You may shower, have a bath, or go in a pool – however you should take precautions about how long you are in the water and you may need to limit swimming times. After swimming or bathing, make sure you thoroughly rinse your cast with a forceful stream of clean water.
2. Your cast will dry completely after getting wet.
3. Do NOT insert anything into your cast. We know it can get itchy, but it is very important that nothing is put inside your cast. Objects inserted into your cast can cause scratches or open areas to develop on the skin which could become infected.
4. Do NOT drive (unless otherwise instructed).
5. Follow your doctor's instructions carefully regarding physical activity.
6. Move the fingers or toes of your casted leg or arm frequently to help reduce swelling and prevent joint stiffness (unless otherwise instructed).
7. Keep your cast elevated higher than heart-level to reduce swelling and pain.
8. Contact your doctor or go to the Emergency Department immediately if you experience any of the following:
 - a. Continued coldness or any discolouration (whitish or bluish colour) of your casted limb.
 - b. Numbness, continued tingling, or loss of movement of your casted limb.
 - c. Pain that is unrelieved by the medication your doctor has prescribed.
 - d. Your cast feels too snug or tight (even after having kept your cast elevated).
 - e. Any type of drainage or foul odour.
9. **Parents:** Small objects should be removed from your home to ensure children do NOT insert anything into their cast.

I got something stuck in my cast. How do I get it out?

Call your doctor or go to the Emergency Department to have your cast removed and changed.

What if the cast gets cracked or damaged?

Small cracks may happen, however if the overall integrity of the cast is compromised (the cast is no longer able to hold the limb in the correct position) then it should be changed. Call your doctor or go to the Emergency Department.

My cast is taking forever to dry. How can I dry it?

For most people, the cast will dry in less than 90 minutes. Humidity levels, your body temperature, your activity level, and the air temperature are all factors that will affect drying time. To speed up the drying time process, the use of a hair dryer on the cool setting may help. Never use a heat setting because you may burn your skin.

How long can my cast stay in water for?

Your cast can stay in water for no longer than one to two hours. It is important that you do not go to the beach, or anywhere where sand may make its way into your cast.