

Frequently asked questions following a broken bone/fracture...

1. How long will I be in the cast?

The length of casting depends on which bone is broken and the severity of the break. Typically, the cast is worn for 4-6 weeks followed by an activity restriction period to allow for regain of strength and motion.

2. How will I shower/bathe with the cast?

The material used in casting is water wicking, but not water-proof. However, it is important to cover the cast while in the shower because soap and shampoo suds can cause dryness of the skin which leads to itching! We suggest covering the cast with a plastic bag and sealing the end with press and seal saran wrap or something similar. Ask the Doctor or PA about swimming before you jump in!!

3. What do I do if the cast gets wet?

It is important to try to keep the cast as dry as possible. If the cast does become wet, don't panic, allow 1-2 hours for the cast to dry. If the Doctor or PA allows for swimming in the cast, make sure to get your child out of the water at least 2-3 hours before bedtime to allow the cast to dry, use a hairdryer on the lowest setting if needed for drying.

4. How do I prevent the cast from smelling/itching?

This is one of the toughest tasks. In order to minimize odor, you may sprinkle baby powder or corn starch down the cast. **Do not** spray perfumes or air-fresheners into the cast for they may irritate the skin with prolonged exposure. Undoubtedly, your child will experience itching in the cast. Tapping on the top of the cast or distracting your child may help, but if prolonged itching occurs, an over the counter anti-histamine (Benadryl) can be used with dosage according to the directions on the back of the bottle. **Do not** place any objects in the cast!! Sharp objects like coat hangers can scratch the skin and lead to an infection in the cast.

5. What exactly does the cast or splint do?

Casts and/or splints are applied to help protect the fracture and maintain proper alignment for healing. Initially, a splint is typically applied to allow for swelling from the injury. Sometimes a splint will be used after casting to help protect from re-injury and allow muscle stiffness to resolve.

Contact your doctor if.

1. Your child has pain or swelling that seems unreasonable*
2. Your child experience numbness or persistent tingling after casting*
3. Your child feels a blister or sore developing inside the cast
4. The cast breaks, cracks or develops soft spots
5. The cast becomes too loose or comes off
6. You have any questions or concerns regarding your child's treatment
7. There an object or toy stuck in the cast and cannot remove it



*If you are unable to reach your doctor (after hours answering service), proceed to the nearest emergency department

The Do's and Don'ts of Cast Care

Do:

1. Follow your doctor's instructions
2. Keep your cast clean
3. Inspect the edges of the cast and skin
4. File down rough edges of the cast with an emery board if irritating
5. Keep elevated to help reduce swelling for the first few days after placement of the cast
6. Place ice bag on cast if needed for pain or swelling

Do Not:

1. Insert objects into the cast such as sticks, pencils, or rulers
2. Use oil-based lotions near the cast
3. Pull out or re-arrange the cast liner
4. Engage in vigorous activity
5. Play in sand or dirt with cast
6. Try to remove or cut cast