

Cast & Splint Care Instructions

1. Keep it dry

- For showers/baths:
 - Wrap a dry washcloth at the end of the splint/cast, secure with tape or rubber band.
 - Put a plastic bag over the cast/splint, secure with tape or rubber band over the towel.
 - Putting a towel at the open end of the bag should stop any water that leaks through the plastic bag before getting to cast/splint.
- Cast covers:
 - Cast covers are available for purchase at NOI, medical supply stores, or through Amazon.
 - Keep water out just as well as a plastic bag and towel will.
 - Pro's: reusable and may be easier to do on your own
 - Con's: cannot use with splints (it will destroy soft outer wrappings), can be difficult or painful to push through small and tight rubber opening.
- If it gets wet:
 - A few drops at the cuff should dry and is not a problem.
 - If the cast gets saturated, where the water gets wicked underneath the fiberglass, it will not dry.
 - If it gets saturated, call our office ASAP to arrange a time to come in for a cast change.
 - Do not stay in a saturated cast for more than 24 hours, the skin will start to break down before the cast or splint could possibly dry. If that happens, the skin can become infected.
 - If you cannot get into our office within 24 hours of getting the cast/splint wet, go to urgent care to have them take it off and put you into a temporary one.

2. Keep it elevated

- The injured extremity will need to be held above the level of the heart. This will get gravity working with you to drain the fluid out of the cast/splint.
- Prevention is key.
 - Whenever you are sitting or laying down use the opportunity to elevate your injury.
- Symptoms of swelling in a cast/splint can include:
 - Increased pain or feeling like the cast is too tight
 - Tingling or numbness
 - Coldness or discoloration of extremities
- If you are experiencing one of the symptoms above:
 - Get your injured extremity elevated above the heart
 - Perpendicular to the floor is ideal
 - The higher, the better
 - Give it an hour
 - If not relieved after an hour, call us.
 - If we are unavailable, go to the hospital to have it bi-valved

3. Do not stick/put anything in your cast or splint

- Itching
 - Should not be a big issue.
 - We use special materials designed to prevent the itch.
 - For casts: tapping on the cast with a hard object creates a vibration throughout, which usually does the trick.
 - For casts & splints: scratching the opposite limb tricks your mind into thinking you're scratching the itchy limb, thus relieving the itch.
 - All itching can be relieved by Benadryl, but keep in mind it may cause drowsiness
- Why is it dangerous to stick something in your cast/splint?
 - You can tear the skin and cause an infection. Since it's covered, we won't know about the infection to be able to treat it, which can become dangerous.
 - For casts: You can move the cotton padding around.
 - Cotton is keeping you safe from the saw when we cut the cast off, so it's important that it does not get pushed out of place by a foreign object.
 - A foreign object in the cast can cause the cotton to bunch up in a certain spot, which could cause a pressure sore. This can get infected, as well.
 - If part of the object gets stuck or dislodged in the cast, it can create a pressure sore, which is not only uncomfortable, but also it can cause the skin to open and potentially cause infection.
- Young children like to use their cast as a piggy bank or a place to store small objects (Lego's, wood chips, etc). Please keep coins & small objects away from small children in cast/splint.
 - If your child is beginning to cry or fuss more than normal without new injury, there may be an object inside the cast/splint. Bring them in ASAP.

4. Appropriate use of your injured extremity:

- Activities to avoid (unless otherwise stated by physician):
 - Contact sports
 - Activities where you are at risk of falling
 - Activities that can involve a direct blow to the injured limb
 - Weight-bearing (including upper extremity)
 - Lifting, gripping, pushing, pulling anything >1 lb
 - Activities causing profuse sweating
 - can saturate cast/splint
 - can cause skin irritation
- Recommended activities (unless otherwise stated by physician):
 - Move joints that are not immobilized by cast or splint (it is safe)
 - May include: fingers, thumb, elbow, shoulder, toes, knee, etc.
 - Helps with unnecessary stiffness and swelling
 - NO STRENGTHING, *movement* only
 - Fine motor movements are good therapy:
 - Finding activities that will get your free joints moving will get blood flowing and help fight against stiffness without thinking about it.
 - Typing, writing, texting, clicking mouse, using a videogame controller, playing piano, brushing teeth, knitting, etc.

With any questions or concerns regarding your cast, please call us at (949) 722-7038.