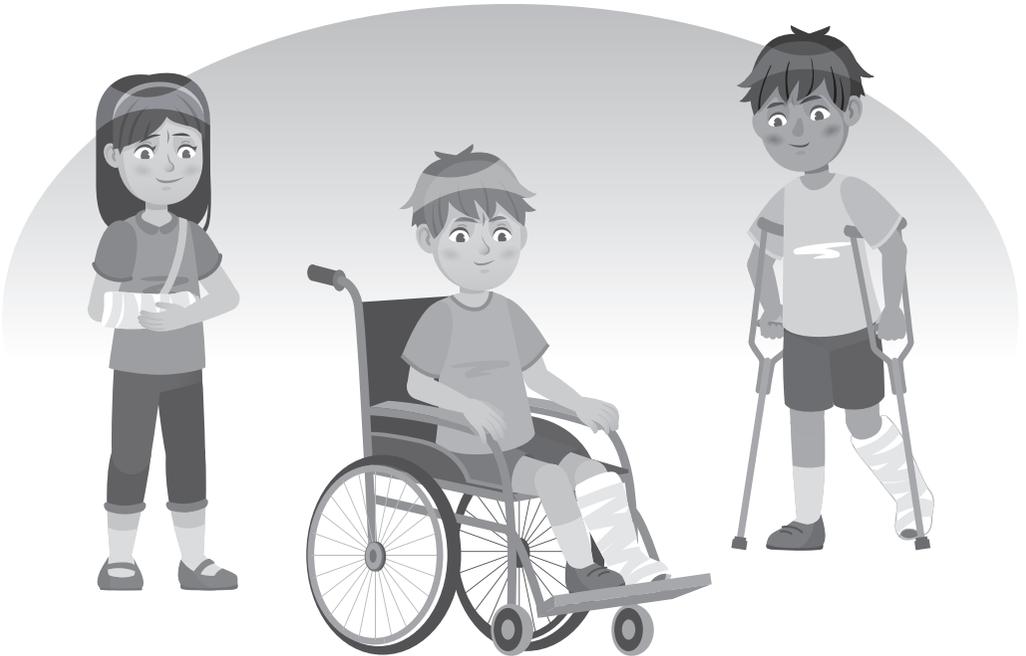


Information for patients and carers about

Plaster Cast Instructions



Plaster Room

Hours of Service: Mon- Fri, 9am-5pm

Telephone Number: 0141 452 4129

(If Out of Hours contact Emergency Department on 0141 452 4055)

If you require this information in an accessible format, such as large print or braille or in a community language, please use the contact details on your patient information leaflet or letter.



إذا كنتم تحتاجون إلى هذه المعلومات في تنسيقٍ يسهل الاطلاع عليه، كأن تُطبع بأحرف كبيرة أو تُكتب بطريقة بريل أو تُترجم إلى إحدى اللغات المحلية، يُرجى استخدام بيانات الاتصال المذكورة في نشرة المعلومات المريض أو الخطاب المرسل لكم.

如果您需要便于使用的信息版本，例如大号字体版本或盲文版或社区语言版本，请使用您的患者信息单或信函上的联系信息索取相应版本。

اگر این اطلاعات را در قالبی مناسبتر همچون چاپ درشت یا خط بریل یا زبانی خاص نیاز دارید، لطفاً با استفاده از اطلاعات تماس درج شده بر روی بروشور یا نامه بیمار خود، با ما تماس بگیرید.

Aby uzyskać te informacje w przystępnym formacie, np. w druku powiększonym, alfabcie Braille'a lub w języku wspólnoty, prosimy o kontakt pod adresem podanym w liście lub na ulotce informacyjnej dla pacjenta.

Dacă aveți nevoie de aceste informații într-un format accesibil, cum ar fi caractere mărite, scriere braille sau într-o limbă comunitară, vă rugăm să utilizați datele de contact din scrisoarea sau prospectul informativ pentru pacient.

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی قابل رسائی فارمیٹ، جیسے بڑے حروف یا بریل یا کسی کمیونٹی زبان میں درکار ہے، تو براہ کرم آپ اپنے مریض سے متعلق معلوماتی پرچے یا خط پر دی گئی رابطے کی تفصیلات استعمال کریں۔

Introduction

We have applied a plaster cast to either you or your child's arm or leg due to the following reason(s):

- Break in the bone
- Post orthopaedic surgery
- Soft tissue injury

This is to help support and protect your or their arm or leg while it heals.

Staff will advise what type of injury has occurred or surgery has been performed, and how long the plaster cast should remain in place.

If you are unclear about any aspect of your treatment or injury, please ask a member of staff.



Plaster Cast Care

In order to protect the plaster cast, and encourage healing, please follow the advice below:

- Allow 48 hours for the plaster of Paris to dry.
- Allow 30 minutes for light weight plaster to dry.
- Do not walk on the plaster cast, unless medical staff tell you to do so.
- Young children should avoid crawling if there is a back slab in place.
- Do not get the plaster cast wet. This can make the cast soft and reduce its effectiveness. A soft cast can also damage the skin underneath the plaster.
- It can be difficult to clean exposed skin properly while the plaster cast is in place. There are many waterproof covers that can be applied to keep the plaster cast dry while bathing or showering. Nursing staff will discuss these further with you.

- If you are still concerned the plaster cast may get wet, you can always wash the exposed parts of skin daily with a damp cloth and non-perfumed soap, until the plaster cast is removed.

If you or your child have any of the following concerns, then you must contact the Plaster room or Emergency Department immediately:

- The cast feels tight, painful, and/or pressing on the skin
- Toes or fingers are swollen, red and/or discoloured
- Moving fingers or toes is painful
- There is a change in the feeling in the fingers or toes, for example pins and needles or tingling, (particularly in the calf area)*
- Pain underneath the cast, especially at the heel or calf area
- There is a smell coming from the cast
- The cast is broken or cracked
- The cast is too loose and slips off
- Edges of the cast rub against the skin causing redness, blistering, or bleeding
- The cast gets wet

*Some older children are at higher risk of developing a blood clot in their leg while they have their leg in plaster and are moving about less. This can present as calf pain and we advise they get urgent medical attention if you have any concerns.

Plaster room number: 0141 452 4129

Emergency Department (Out of hours): 0141 452 4055

Do Not:

- Attempt to remove the plaster cast yourself.
- Poke any items inside your or your child's plaster cast, e.g. knitting needles, pens, rulers, etc., to scratch the skin to relieve itch. You can buy antihistamine medication from the local Chemist to help relieve the itch.
- Wear rings or nail polish whilst in plaster cast.
- Place heels or elbows on hard surfaces for long periods of time, as pressure damage can occur.

Signs of infection

Sometimes infection can develop at the bone injury site or wound site.

Signs of infection are:

- Increase in temperature.
- Increase of pain at the site, or pain not settling after 72 hours when using regular pain relief.
- Increase of swelling at the site.
- Foul smell coming from inside the plaster cast.
- Redness noted to be spreading from initial injury site.
- Or feeling more tired than normal, reduced appetite, having loose stools.

If any concerns, contact the Plaster room or Out of Hours service to request an immediate review.

Raise arm or leg

To prevent swelling, perform the following:

- Keep the hand higher than the elbow for the first 48 hours when up and about, unless staff tell you otherwise. Use the sling provided.
- Keep the foot higher than the hip, level with the heart, for the first 48 hours. Place pillows, cushions or a rolled blanket under the leg to keep this position.
- Raise the leg on a daily basis.

Toes and fingers may become blue due to bruising or circulatory problems. If this happens **raise the affected arm or leg**. This should help, if it doesn't contact the Plaster room or Emergency department.

Exercise all joints outside the plaster cast. For example, when awake, move the fingers or toes for five minutes every hour to keep the joints and circulation working well, and reduce swelling.

The plaster cast itself should be comfortable on. There may be some pain or discomfort for the first week from your or child's injury. Taking simple painkillers such as paracetamol should help. It is important to follow manufacturers and medical staff guidance.

You should take pain relief before attending the Plaster clinic or a review appointment.

Crutches



If you cannot put any weight on your leg:

Keep the injured leg off the ground by holding it slightly in front with the knee slightly bent.

1. Move your crutches one pace forward slightly apart and level.
2. Move body forward or hop between your crutches allowing your uninjured leg to swing through.

If you can put some weight on your leg:

1. Move your crutches one pace slightly forward.
2. Place the injured leg onto the ground level with your crutches, which support some of the body weight.
3. Step through with the uninjured leg.

Note: Do not 'pad' the crutch handles at any time.

Do not use crutches as toys or weapons.

Stairs

If you have to use stairs, try to have someone with you until you get used to them. Hold on to at least one handrail if possible. Hold the spare crutch tighter with the handle of the other crutch. The crutch(es) go on the same step as the injured leg.

Going up: the uninjured leg goes up first, with the crutches being followed by the injured leg onto the same step. The procedure is repeated.

Going down: the injured leg goes first, with the crutches being followed by the uninjured leg onto the same step. The procedure is repeated.

Chairs

Getting out:

1. Crutches should be near the chair or held in one hand.
2. Push up on one crutch and the opposite arm of the chair to help you stand up.

Getting in to the chair:

1. Position yourself in front of the chair ready to sit down.
2. Remove both arms from the crutches, hold the crutches in one hand or place near chair, and sit down.

General Safety

- Use a chair with high seat and arms to help you sit and stand up easily.
- Remove obstacles that you or your child may fall over such as toys, loose rugs, draught excluders and worn floor coverings.
- Lighting in hallways and stairways must be adequate.
- Wear flat, supportive shoes.
- Avoid wet floors.
- Beware of outdoor hazards including uneven surfaces, wet leaves and ice.
- Avoid playing in parks.
- Avoid playing with water and sand.
- If travelling by plane, make sure you contact your airline. If the plaster cast requires to be 'split' for flying, contact the Plaster room for advice.

Return your crutches or wheelchair

Please return the crutches and, or zimmer aid to the Physiotherapy Department.

Wheelchairs should be returned to the Orthotic Department.

Appointments

If you are unable to keep your return appointment please telephone the number on your appointment card or letter and let them know. The staff will then give you an alternative time to attend.



Adopted and adapted with permission from NHS Lanarkshire