

Cast Care Instructions

DO:

- **Do** follow your Doctor's Instruction.
- **Do** keep the cast clean and dry.
- **Do** elevate your cast if it begins to feel tight.
- **Do** cover your cast to prevent it from getting wet.
- **Do** file down rough edges from the cast with a metal file if they are irritating your skin.

DO NOT:

- Do **NOT** put pressure through your cast as this may cause damage to the cast and disrupt healing.
- Do **NOT** put anything inside the cast. Scratching under the cast may break the skin and lead to infection.
- Do **NOT** get cast wet.
- Do **NOT** submerge it in water even with a cast cover on it. Cast covers are effective in keeping the cast dry while showering but less effective when they are submerged in pools, hot tubs, bath tubs, etc.
- Do **NOT** put any powders, colognes, perfumes or air fresheners down or your cast. This may cause harmful skin reactions and lead to infection.

What to do for Swelling:

- **Elevation:** Elevate the hand above the level of your heart and if possible, wiggle the fingers to help move the swelling back towards your body. If you are having trouble wiggling the fingers on your own, use your other hand to gently move the fingers.
- **Massage:** Grasp the tip of the finger and slide your hand towards the wrist in a "milking" motion. Massage in ONE direction only for 5 minutes at a time.
- **Ice:** Cover cast with plastic and apply ice over the cast. If you do not feel this is helping, you may place the icepack in the front of the elbow or under your armpit to help cool the blood as it goes to your hand. Do **NOT** place ice directly on your skin, make sure there is a barrier between your skin and the ice to prevent skin injury.
- **NSAIDs:** Take NSAIDs (anti-inflammatories) as directed, these medications can help with pain and swelling.

How to Bathe/Shower:

- Cover the cast with a "Cast Cover" or a plastic bag without holes and secure the end with a rubber band or tape. Do **NOT** use grocery bags as these are not effective. "Cast Covers" are manufactured to seal out water during bathing and can be purchased at medical suppliers or online retailers.

What to do if your cast gets "wet":

- **Slightly Damp Cast:** You may place a hairdryer on the **cool setting ONLY** to blow air over the cast. Fiberglass allows air to flow through and assist in the drying process. If you have any trouble getting the cast dry, call the office to find out if the cast needs to be replaced.
- **Wet Cast:** Casts wet enough to have the skin underneath become wet requires a call to the office. Wet skin under a cast for an extended period may cause skin breakdown or infection.

When to Call the Office (405.692.3748):

- If the cast is too loose, especially if the cast is irritating the skin.
- Rough places irritate the skin and filing does not work.
- Cast gets wet enough that the skin gets wet under the cast.
- Cast emits an unusual odor (mildew or mold).
- Cast begins to breakdown.
- Pain, swelling, numbness or tingling that is not alleviated by any of the above recommendations for swelling.
- Experiencing a burning sensation or feel a blister or sore developing inside the cast.
- Change in skin temperature (skin feels cold) accompanied by the pink color in the fingertips not returning after being squeezed (capillary refill).
- Development of a fever.