

# Plaster Cast Care Instructions

## for Lower Limb Injuries

Patient Information Leaflet



### About Your Injury

You have a fracture or break in one (or more) of the bones in your ankle. The decision has been made to manage your injury in a cast.

### What can I Expect

- You will potentially be in cast for 4-6 weeks, depending on your injury. You may have been given crutches or a frame to aid your mobility whilst in cast and instructions on whether you should be weight bearing on the injured limb. Following your time in cast you may go into a splint but this is not routine practice.
- In this time your cast may be changed if required.
- Your cast should be well fitting but not so tight that it is causing discomfort or sensory changes in your foot.

#### Do

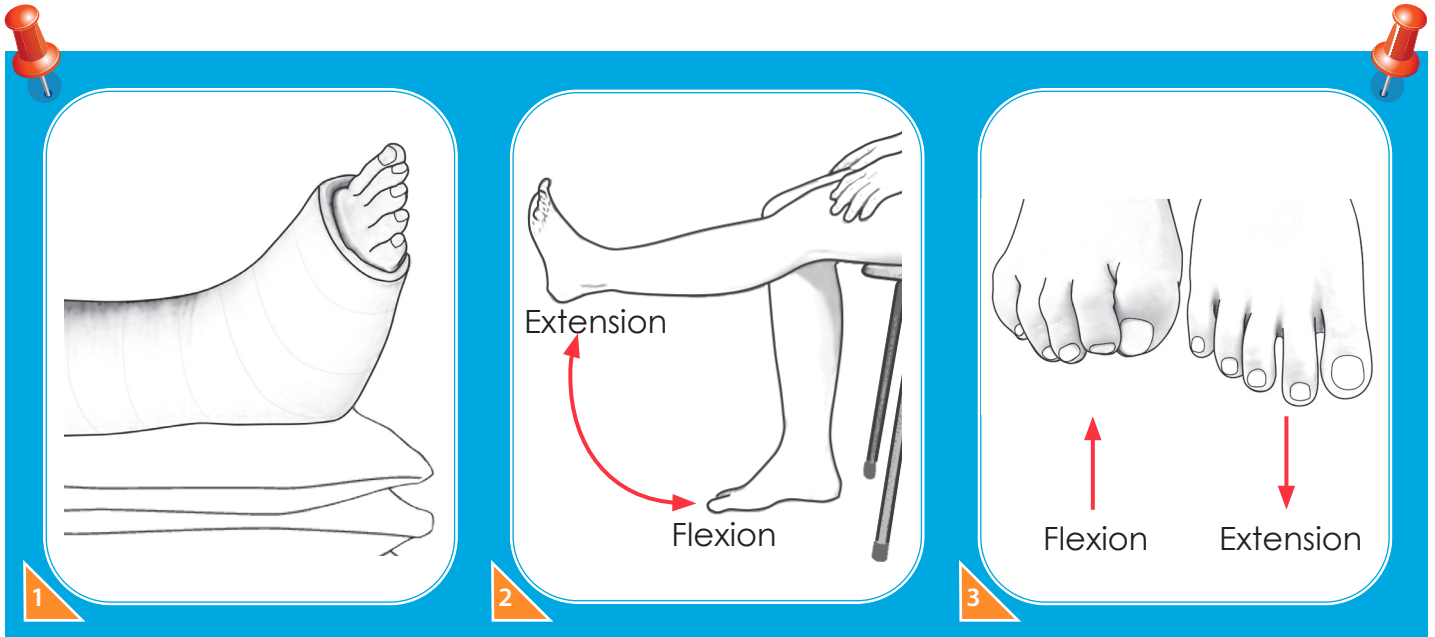
- Keep your limb elevated when you sit down. Do this as much as you can for the first week. This will help any swelling to go down.
- Do the exercise your toes, knee and hip at least 4 times a day, to help reduce the stiffness in your affected limb.
- Use painkillers if you experience any pain.
- You may return to school or work with a cast if you can mobilise safely, but you should avoid strenuous activities that may damage the broken bone or cast.

#### Don't

- Don't get your plaster cast wet. This will weaken it and your bone will no longer be properly supported.
- If your cast gets wet, contact your hospital or the Plaster Room for advice as soon as possible.
- Always remove any covering as soon as you can to avoid causing sweating, which could also damage the cast.
- Even if the plaster cast makes your skin feel very itchy, don't poke anything underneath it. This could cause a nasty sore and lead to infection.
- Avoid getting small objects, powders and sprays inside your cast, as they could irritate your skin.
- Don't try to alter the length or position of your cast.
- You can weight bear on the injured limb in cast, when you are told it is safe to do so.
- Don't drive until the cast has been removed and safe to do so (ask your Consultant when this may be).
- It is possible to buy special covers for plaster casts, to keep them dry, when washing or bathing. Ask the Emergency Department staff / Plaster room staff or local pharmacist for information.
- Don't try to use plastic bags, bin liners, cling film or similar to keep the cast dry.

# Smoking

Medical evidence suggests that smoking prolongs fracture healing time. Stopping smoking during the healing phase of your fracture will ensure optimal recovery. If you require advice or assistance to stop smoking go to <http://smokefree.nhs.uk> or discuss with your GP.



1 Elevation

2 Knee movements

3 Wiggle toes

# Caution

If you have any increase in pain, pain in the calf or groin, chest pain or shortness of breath, Please seek urgent review.

If your plaster becomes too tight, your swelling increases, you develop constant pins and needles or you have increased pain, please attend or contact the Plaster Room on:

01463 704294  
Mon - Fri 9am - 5pm,  
or A&E at any other time.

If you have any other concerns please contact the Fracture Nurse on:

## Contact details:

Raigmore Hospital  
Old Perth Road,  
Inverness, IV12 3UJ.  
Tel: 01463 704000 ext:4294

Tel: Fracture Clinic Helpline -

Monday to Friday  
12 - 3 pm  
07779 422980

In an emergency contact NHS 24 - Tel: 111

Issue 2	Date of issue: July 2024	Date of Review: July 2026
Devised by: Fracture clinic, NHS Highland		