

Wrist Fracture Management and Plaster cast care Instructions

About your injury

- When you fracture or break your wrist it can involve one or both of the bones in your wrist. The decision has been made to manage your wrist in a cast.

What can I expect?

- You will be in cast for 4-6 weeks depending on your injury. Following this 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 hand.



Do: ✓

- Keep your hand raised above your elbow as much as you can for the first week. This will help any swelling to go down.
- Do exercise your shoulder, elbow, fingers and thumb, as shown on reverse, 4 times a day to help reduce the stiffness in your affected limb
- Use painkillers if you experience any pain
- You can usually return to school or work with a cast, but you should avoid strenuous activities that may damage the broken bone or cast

Don't: X

- 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
- Don't lift anything heavy or drive until the cast has been removed
- 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.

You should try these exercises 4 times a day.
Do each exercise 10 times.



Lift your
arm above your head



Elevate your arm
while resting



Spread your
fingers



Make a fist



Touch each finger
with your thumb



Use your hand for light activities



CAUTION:

If you 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 9-5 or A&E at any other time. If you have any other concerns please contact the Fracture Nurse on 07779 422980 - Helpline open Mon-Fri 12-3pm)