

Going Home with Your Cast

Cast care, skin care, and when to call the doctor

Read this handout before you go home with your new cast. If you have any questions, please talk with your doctor or nurse.

Cast Care

- **Keep your cast dry.** If the padding under a fiberglass cast gets wet, it can irritate your skin. This can cause sores to form.
 - When showering, bathing, or in wet weather, cover your cast with a plastic bag or cast bag to keep it dry.
 - If your cast does get wet, do **not** put any weight on it. Please call your doctor and ask for help.
- **Do not paint or varnish your cast.** The cast needs to breathe so that your skin beneath it does not get irritated.



Cover your cast with a plastic bag or cast bag to keep it dry.

Skin Care

- Check your skin around your cast every day to make sure there is no irritation.
- Wash your skin around your cast and your fingers or toes, but do **not** get the cast wet. Dry well.
- If you use hand lotion, make sure it does not build up under the edges of your cast.
- Your skin under your cast may itch. Do **not** push anything inside your cast to scratch. This may wrinkle the padding and irritate your skin. You could also lose part of your scratcher inside your cast. This could cause a sore or start a serious infection. If the itching is very bad, your doctor can prescribe medicine to help.

When to Call the Doctor

- Your cast will stay the same size as when it was made. It should not cause you any pain. But, your arm or leg under your cast may swell. If your cast starts to feel too tight, lie down and raise your arm or leg with the cast above the level of your heart. If this does not help within 30 minutes, call your doctor.
- Also call your doctor if:
 - You have pain under or around the edges of your cast.
 - Your limb below or above your cast swells, feels cold to the touch, or is pale or bluish. This means that your cast is affecting your blood flow.
 - You have a burning feeling under your cast or a feeling of “pins and needles” in your fingers or toes that won’t go away.
 - Your cast gets wet.
 - Your cast cracks, gets soft, or feels too loose.

Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or healthcare provider if you have questions or concerns. You can also send us a message with your eCare account.

To speak with a staff person weekdays, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., call:

- The Hand Center at 206.598.4263
- Or
- The Bone and Joint Center at 206.598.4288

After hours and on weekends and holidays, call 206.598.6190 and ask to page the Hand Fellow or Orthopedist on call.

To learn more about the Hand Center, visit www.uwhand.com.