

Plaster advice

An information guide



Plaster advice

This leaflet contains discharge advice following your attendance at the Accident & Emergency Department (A&E).

Due to your injury you have had a plaster of paris (POP/cast) applied.

Plaster instructions

Your plaster will take 48 hours to dry completely. Until then it will feel very heavy and it is not very strong. At first it will also feel very warm.

- **DO NOT** get your plaster wet.
- **DO NOT** push objects into the cast. In particular, **DO NOT** try to scratch with knitting needles, pens etc. This may cause breaks in your skin which can lead to infection or ulcers.
- **DO** exercise all joints not included in the plaster, especially fingers, toes, elbow, knee and shoulder – this will help to reduce swelling and prevent stiffness of these joints.
- **DO** rest and elevate the limb on pillows or cushions when you are not using it.
- **DO NOT** drive without first checking with your insurance company.

Exercises for an injured arm

Exercising your hand and arm while in plaster will help to reduce swelling of the hand, which will speed up recovery when the plaster is removed.

You should try to perform these exercises every hour when possible. If you have been given a sling to wear, remove it before doing the exercises.

- Lift your arm above your head 5 times.
- Bend and straighten your arm 5 times (not for patients whose plaster comes above the elbow).
- Close your fingers and try to touch the plaster across your palm 10 times, then straighten your fingers fully 10 times.
- Take your thumb to touch the tip of each finger in turn. The plaster may restrict how far across your palm you can reach.
- If you cannot touch the plaster with your fingertips, please tell the doctors when you attend the fracture clinic.

Exercises for an injured lower leg (below knee plaster cast)

Exercising your thigh muscles while in plaster will strengthen your knee and help with your recovery when the plaster is removed. Repeat the following exercises 4 times a day.

- Tighten your thigh muscles and hold for the count of 5 and then relax. Repeat 10 times.
- With your knee straight, slowly lift and lower your leg and then relax. Repeat 10 times.

IMPORTANT - If you notice any of the following you should return to the A&E Department:

- Your fingers or toes become painful, swollen or numb.
- Your fingers or toes become pale or blue.
- The plaster becomes wet, cracked, loose or uncomfortable.
- The plaster becomes too tight.
- You experience numbness, tingling or pins and needles.
- There is severe pain or other irritation under the plaster.
- A foul smelling odour coming from your cast.

If English is not your first language and you need help, please contact the Interpretation and Translation Service

Jeśli angielski nie jest twoim pierwszym językiem i potrzebujesz pomocy, skontaktuj się z działem tłumaczeń ustnych i pisemnych

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Dacă engleza nu este prima ta limbă și ai nevoie de ajutor, te rugăm să contactezi Serviciul de interpretare și traducere

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إذا لم تكن الإنجليزية هي لغتك الأولى وتحتاج إلى مساعدة ، فيرجى الاتصال بخدمة الترجمة الشفوية والتحريرية

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For advice on stopping smoking contact the Specialist Stop Smoking Service on 01706 517 522

For general enquiries please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 0161 604 5897

For enquiries regarding clinic appointments, clinical care and treatment please contact 0161 624 0420 and the Switchboard Operator will put you through to the correct department / service

The Northern Care Alliance NHS Group (NCA) is one of the largest NHS organisations in the country, employing 17,000 staff and providing a range of hospital and community healthcare services to around 1 million people across Salford, Oldham, Bury, Rochdale and surrounding areas. Our Care Organisations are responsible for providing our services, delivering safe, high quality and reliable care to the local communities they serve.

The NCA brings together Salford Royal NHS Foundation Trust and the hospitals and community services of The Royal Oldham Hospital, Fairfield General Hospital in Bury, and Rochdale Infirmary (currently part of The Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust).

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