

- If possible regularly bend your knee. Either sit down and bend your knee and then straighten your knee, or lie on your tummy on the bed and bend your knee, bringing your heel towards your bottom. Slowly lower your foot back down to the bed, keeping the movement slow and controlled.
- Hip flexion and extension – stand and swing the leg in a forward and back motion, or lie on the bed and flex at the hip keeping the leg braced.

### Resources/contacts

- Your local pharmacy - [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk).
- Your GP surgery - please contact your GP when the surgery is open, and call 111 when the GP is closed.
- NHS 111 provides advice for urgent care needs and is open 24hrs a day. They can arrange urgent GP appointments and calls from landlines and mobiles are free.
- NHS Choices – [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk).
- [www.whittington.nhs.uk](http://www.whittington.nhs.uk).

### Patient advice and liaison service (PALS)

If you have a compliment, complaint or concern please contact our PALS team on 020 7288 5551 or [whh-tr.whitthealthPALS@nhs.net](mailto:whh-tr.whitthealthPALS@nhs.net)

If you need a large print, audio or translated copy of this leaflet please contact us on 020 7288 3182. We will try our best to meet your needs.

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## Plaster Care For Children

### A parent's guide



## Introduction

- Your child has been discharged home with a plaster cast on their arm or leg. This is to prevent any movement of the broken bone while it is healing.
- The initial plaster we apply in ED will stay on until you come back for your fracture clinic appointment in 7-10 days' time.
- A plaster cast will usually stay on for 4-6 weeks in order to give the bone time to heal correctly.

## Looking after your plaster

- The plaster will take 24 – 48 hours to dry completely.
- Do not put any weight or pressure onto the plaster; it may crack and become ineffective.
- Elevate the affected arm or leg, keep the arm in the sling provided or raise the limb on a soft surface, such as a pillow.
- This will help any swelling to go down and will help the cast dry correctly.
- Do not get your plaster cast wet. This will weaken it, and your bone will no longer be properly supported.
- You can use a plastic bag to cover up the cast when you have a bath or shower. Try using sticky tape or a rubber band to seal the bag at the top and bottom to make it as watertight as possible.

- Take regular pain relief; keep the fingers and toes moving by wriggling them.
- Plaster casts can make your skin feel itchy, do not be tempted to put anything down the cast. This can cause irritation or cuts to the skin which can become infected.
- Do not attempt to remove your plaster, if you have any concerns contact ED.
- If your leg is in plaster you will be told if you are allowed to put any weight on the affected leg, use the crutches/frames/sticks provided as required.

## When to worry?

- You must return to ED if you start developing any of the following symptoms:
- The cast feels too tight and is becoming painful, this includes tingling sensation, numbness, swelling or pins and needles.
  - Your fingers or toes are turning from a pink/normal colour to a pale white or blue colour.
  - The skin underneath the cast or around the edges feels sore or is breaking down.
  - If your cast has broken or cracked.
  - The cast feels loose or unsupported and you are unable to move the affected limb.

## Exercises in POP

Exercises are important as they will make sure your unaffected joints do not become stiff, and will help maintain good circulation. This will help with fracture healing.

### **Wrist, Elbow & Shoulder**

- Finger flexion and extension - start with your fingers straight and then bend them into a fist.
- Start with all your fingers straight and then  
Bend the knuckle joints of all your fingers, keeping the fingers straight
- Touch the tip of each finger with your thumb, repeat five times.
- Slowly bend your affected elbow so your hand moves towards your shoulder and then fully straighten your elbow. Repeat five times
- Slowly lift your affected arm up towards the ceiling keeping the elbow straight, and then lower again. Repeat five times.

### **Foot, Ankle, Knee & Hip**

- Wiggle your toes while lying in bed or whilst sat up with your leg elevated. Try and do this for at least 10 seconds, and as often as you can.