

CAST CARE / SPLINT CARE

The following are the Do's and Don'ts of cast or splint care.

DO'S

Elevate the cast (affected body part) when swelling or tightness is present. Move fingers and toes frequently to increase circulation and decrease stiffness. Keep cast clean and dry. Inspect the skin around the edges of the cast for any reddened spots (rashes) or sores. Minor rough edges may be filed down with an emery board. To keep the cast dry while showering or bathing, use a double plastic bag from the pharmacy while remembering that the rubber band or strap used in this process will cut down the circulation-only leave the bag on long enough to get in and out of the shower/ bath.

DON'TS

Do not get your cast wet or go swimming while wearing it. Do not stick any objects inside the cast to scratch (no coat hanger, pencils, pens, etc.). Do not pull out the cast padding or place padding inside of the cast. Do not break off or trim the cast edges.

CONTACT YOUR DOCTOR IF:

Pain and swelling cannot be controlled with ice, elevation and or pain medication. You notice any staining showing through the cast or any unusual odors coming from the cast. You have excessive itching that is not controlled with 'baby powder'. You experience any numbness or persistent tingling. Your cast becomes wet, badly spoiled, breaks, gets soft spots, becomes excessively loose, or the feeling of blisters develops inside the cast. If reddened spots (rashes) or open cuts/ sores develop around the edges of the cast.

If your cast becomes slightly damp, first try to dry it with a hair dryer turned on the low setting. If that does not work, contact your doctor.

Do not drive unless first checking with your insurance company to see if your policy covers driving with a cast. Also, do not drive if you are taking any pain medication.

To help control initial swelling, apply ice and keep injured part of the body elevated above the level of the heart. Elevating the body part can be done with pillows, blankets or by sitting in a recliner.