

# Caring for your child's plaster cast

A plaster cast is made of a bandage, padding and a hard, tough covering. It will stop your child's damaged bone moving, reduce discomfort, and allow the bone and surrounding tissues to heal.

## Do

- Keep the cast dry.
- Raise the injured limb whenever possible to prevent or reduce swelling.
- Exercise the joints that are not covered by the cast, such as elbow, knee, fingers or toes. This helps maintain circulation and reduces stiffness.
- Make sure that all supportive devices (slings, crutches) are used as instructed.

## Do not

- Get the cast wet as this will weaken it.
- Knock or bump the cast as it can bend or crack it.
- Put anything inside the cast. It can get sweaty and itchy but do not stick things down the cast to scratch.
- Attempt to cut or reposition the cast at home.

## Things to look out for

Please return to the Emergency Department (A&E) if you notice any of the following:

- coldness or blue/white discolouration of your child's fingers or toes
- pins and needles and/or numbness of your child's fingers or toes
- increase in pain that doesn't settle with painkillers (described below)
- persistent swelling of fingers or toes despite the injured limb being raised
- the cast gets wet, dirty, cracked, broken or loose
- if an object becomes stuck under the cast
- you notice an unpleasant smell or oozing from the cast

## Pain relief

At first your child might need regular painkillers. Use paracetamol and/or ibuprofen as instructed on the packets. If your child has a pre-existing medical condition, please speak to a doctor or nurse for advice on pain relief.

## NHS 111

NHS 111 is a telephone service that offers support and advice 24 hours a day. Please call 111 if you have concerns about your child's health. A fully trained advisor will direct you to appropriate resources or services.

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