Health Information for You
Patient and Family Education
Upstate Connect: 464-8668 • (800)464-8668

Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation

Cast Care

1) Cast will not be totally dry for 1 hour. Avoid walking or putting weight on the cast for 1 hour. Allow to air dry.

2) Do not get the cast wet. A few drops on the outside of the cast is OK, but if the under padding gets wet, then the cast will need to be removed. The under padding will not dry if it gets wet and this will lead to skin maceration (soggy, cracked skin).

3) Do not put anything down the cast. If something goes down in the cast, the cast will need to be taken off. An object in the cast can rub and cause blisters.

4) Watch toes and/or nail beds for change in temperature or color. If the toes are pressed you should see good capillary refill (color returns when toes no longer pressed). If toes are cold or get dark or red or the foot tingles, or feels like it is asleep; then the cast need to be removed.

5) Watch for increased agitation, restlessness, changes in sleep patterns, or changes in walking. This is important in a nonverbal for a younger person. A change in how someone acts could mean there is an issue under the cast.

6) Watch for unusual odors coming from the cast. On more active patients a “smelly sweaty foot” smell is OK.

7) Watch for cracks and dents in the cast especially by the toes. Please call with any concerns. Often times a duct tape patch can be used temporarily.

8) Watch for swelling, pain or pressure, especially in the heel and top of the foot. A “stretching” feeling in the calf or Achilles tendon area (back of ankle) can be treated with a pain reliever if needed. Call if you feel anything like a sore or a blister forming.

*A pillow under the knees or sleeping with the knees bent can help with the “stretching” ache. You can also elevate (lift) the legs, but place pillows under the entire leg. Do not place pillow just under the feet, as this may increase pain.

9) Note any muscle spasms (cramp) and call with concerns.

10) The cast may need to be padded with restless patients or at night if it bangs or scrapes the other leg.