**ARM CAST CARE**

It is important to elevate the arm to prevent and reduce swelling.
- Hand should rest higher than the elbow and the heart.

A sling may be recommended, but usually only for a short time.
- Make sure the elbow rests all the way in the back of the sling.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What to watch for</th>
<th>How to look or feel</th>
<th>What to do</th>
<th>When to call</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Swelling in hand or fingers</td>
<td>Look at end of cast to see if there is space between cast and skin. Compare the healthy side to the side with the cast.</td>
<td>Elevate the hand above the heart.</td>
<td>Swelling does not improve with elevation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pain</td>
<td>When your child looks uncomfortable, ask what hurts.</td>
<td>Give medication recommended by your provider.</td>
<td>Pain that is worsening or not relieved by medications.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circulation (Blood Flow)</td>
<td>Gently squeeze finger on side with cast, area will become white and should return to pink within 4 seconds.</td>
<td>Change position to improve blood flow.</td>
<td>Pale or blue color, or if pink color does not return after 4 seconds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of feeling OR movement</td>
<td>Ask if he or she can feel and move each finger when touched. Also, listen for complaints of numbness or tingling (such as “feeling pins or needles”).</td>
<td>Elevate the hand above the heart.</td>
<td>Not able to feel or move fingers or continued complaints of numbness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temperature change</td>
<td>Feel fingers on both sides of body, they should be similar or slightly different.</td>
<td>Take temperature.</td>
<td>Fingers are much colder than other side or fever greater than 101.5 degrees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skin changes</td>
<td>Look around edges of cast.</td>
<td>Change position to reduce pressure.</td>
<td>Open skin around the cast edges.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Odor</td>
<td>Smell area with cast, “dirty sock” smell is normal.</td>
<td>Keep the exposed skin clean with soap on a damp washcloth.</td>
<td>Odors that are concerning to you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor fit</td>
<td>Look at cast to watch for slipping or increasing tightness caused by swelling.</td>
<td>Follow elevation recommendations for swelling.</td>
<td>Swelling that does not improve or concerns for cast slipping too much.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wet cast</td>
<td>Feel cast for dampness after wet activities.</td>
<td>Avoid getting the cast wet.</td>
<td>Cast is wet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broken cast</td>
<td>Look at and feel cast for changes in shape or hardness.</td>
<td>Limit activity until cast has been replaced or repaired.</td>
<td>Any changes to shape or hardness.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Arm Cast Care**
469-515-7200 • scottishriteforchildren.org
What does a cast do?
- Keeps your elbow or wrist from moving.
- Helps broken bones get better.
- Protects where you had surgery.

Will I feel different after I get my cast?
- Your pain should get better every day.
- Your fingers may get puffy after getting a cast.
  - Raise your arm over your head when this happens.
- Your arm may feel “skinny” after a few weeks.

What can I DO while I have a cast?
- Move your body, but you must follow your provider’s instructions for activities.
- Take care of your cast.
- Tell an adult if anything feels or looks different.
- Cover your cast with a plastic bag when you take a bath or shower.

What should I NOT DO while I have a cast?
- Do not get the cast wet.
- Do not put anything in the cast, even to scratch an itch.
- Do not do anything that will change your cast or the soft materials inside.