

# Your Child's Cast

## – Non water-resistant

This fact sheet explains how to look after your child with a cast. The cast is important to protect the area and keep the limb in the correct position for healing.

### What casting material is used?

The outside of the cast is made up of synthetic material and is water resistant however the padding inside the cast **cannot** get wet and must be looked after with care.

### Circulation

Your child's fingers or toes must always be their normal colour, warm, moving well and have normal sensation to touch. If you are concerned about any of these aspects it is important to **contact your local doctor or WCH**

### Pain relief

At first the injured arm or leg may hurt especially for the next one or two days. During this time it is important to keep the arm or leg elevated and move their fingers or toes whenever possible to help reduce the swelling.

Paracetamol can be given for the first few days to help relieve some of the pain. If the pain continues your child may need to be re-examined. **Contact your local doctor or WCH**

### Skin care / Hygiene

Your child's cast **cannot** get wet. When bathing or showering, cover the cast with a plastic bag and seal well with tape.

If you think your child's cast has accidentally been wet or you notice an unusual smell coming from inside the cast your child may need to be re-examined.

**If a wet cast is not removed your child's skin may become injured and sore. Some of these may include, skin irritation, redness, blisters, a wound. Contact your local doctor or WCH.**

**Do not** allow your child to pull the padding out or put anything down the plaster, even if your child complains of itching (e.g. ruler).

If you suspect that there is an object inside the cast, the cast needs to be removed and the skin checked immediately. **Contact your local doctor or WCH.**

### Cast slipping

It is important to monitor the position of your child's toes in their cast. A slipped cast may cause rubbing and / or pressure on the skin underneath and needs to be looked at as soon as possible. **Contact your local doctor or WCH**

### Activity with a lower limb cast

You will be told if there are any walking restrictions for your child during treatment. If crutches are needed your child will be shown how to use them.

If crutches are needed your child will be shown how to use them. Small children may need to be carried around, placed in a pram/wheelchair or use a roller frame instead of crutches. The hospital physiotherapists can assist you to purchase crutches and hiring a wheelchair if required.

A cast shoe must be worn over the top of the cast to protect the cast and provide grip for safe walking. This will be organised by the Physio before you go home. Be mindful of where your child is walking, and avoid sandy and dusty areas. Activities such as running, bike riding, using a trampoline, sandpits, playgrounds and jumping from heights must be avoided during treatment.

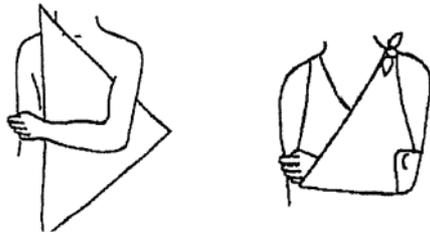


## Your child's sling

A sling will help reduce swelling and support the cast over the next few days but is not needed after this time unless otherwise instructed.

### To apply a sling:

1. Place the triangular bandage over the chest with the point towards the elbow on the injured side.
2. Carry the upper end over the shoulder, around the back of the neck to the injured side.
3. Tie in a knot on the affected side, as shown in the picture.
4. Adjust the sling so that the wrist is in line with or above the elbow.
5. Tuck the excess bandages behind the elbow and secure with a knot



## Follow-up Appointments

**Public patients** will be seen in the Fracture clinic. An appointment time will be given to you before leaving the hospital or posted out to you

**Private patients** may be followed up with the Orthopaedic Doctor in their private clinics outside of the hospital. You will need to contact their private rooms directly to make an appointment. If an x-ray is required, you will be given an x-ray form to have completed before your appointment.

### **Caution**

Immediately contact the hospital or local health service if there is:

- Noticeable change in colour of the fingers or toes in the cast
- Persistent pain or localised burning
- Numbness or tingling in the affected limb not already known to the Orthopaedic team
- Any unusual smell coming from the cast
- Damage to the cast such as padding pulled out, softening/cracking, sharp areas hurting the skin
- Slipping of the cast

Make sure you contact the doctor if the cast is rubbing. It is important that you don't try to trim the cast yourself.

### **Contact details**

- Bring your child into the WCH Emergency Department to be examined
- Call the Women's and Children's Hospital switch on 81617000 to speak to the Orthopaedic team

## For more information

**Women's and Children's Hospital**  
72 King William Road  
North Adelaide 5006

Telephone: (08) 8161 7000  
[www.wch.sa.gov.au](http://www.wch.sa.gov.au)

