

Home care instructions for arm and leg casts

Skin care

- Keep the cast clean and dry. When bathing, place a small towel over the cast then cover the cast completely with a large plastic bag, and tape above level of cast, or sponge bathe only.
- A wet cast will make the cast weak and can also lead to skin problems. A wet cast also smells more. Cast covers or bags can be purchased at many drug stores.
- Your child's cast will probably start to smell over time. If it becomes unbearable you can place two small drops of oil of wintergreen over the cast (available at any drug store).
- Do not put talcum powder or ointments on the skin near the cast
- Do not let your child put things inside of the cast (i.e., food crumbs, small toys, coins, pens, crayons, etc.). If these objects remain in the cast for a long period of time **it will cause skin sores**. If child places object in cast, please bring child in during operating hours for cast change.
- Do not allow your child to use a hanger, pencil, knitting needle or anything similar to scratch inside the cast. These can cause injury to the skin that cannot be seen underneath the cast. To decrease itching sensation, you can utilize a hair dryer using a low cool setting to blow cool air into the cast. **Do not use heat settings.**

Things to do

- Check fingers and/or toes for good circulation. They should be pink and warm.
- Elevate your child's cast with at least 2 pillows (above the level of the heart) unless otherwise specified
- Do not allow your child to walk on the cast unless indicated by you provider. If you child is allowed to walk on the cast, they should always use a cast shoe.

Call Orthopaedic Institute for Children if:

- You see extreme redness of the fingers or toes, especially associated with swelling
- There is continuous swelling of the involved fingers or toes
- The fingers/toes are purple, and are extremely cold
- Your child complains of numbness of the fingers/toes or complains of tingling or "pins and needles"
- Your child complains of persistent pain that does not improve with over the counter pain medications such as Ibuprofen or tylenol
- If there is a foul odor or unexplained drainage from the cast