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Orthopedics

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CAST CARE PRECAUTIONS

The following guidelines are recommended for individuals who have sustained an injury or fracture and are required to have a cast applied. This applies to both plaster and fiberglass casts and splints.

1. Your plaster cast/splint is not completely dry for 48 hours. Fiberglass takes approximately 30 minutes.
2. It will feel warm for approximately 1 hour after application; then it will feel cold.
3. While the cast is drying, handle it carefully; protect it from pressure so that it does not flatten. Use palms of hands when lifting cast so that the fingers will not dent it. Do not step or lean on it.
4. Watch fingers and toes for impaired circulation for the first 24 hours:
 - Blueness
 - Extreme paleness
 - Coldness
 - Swelling
 - Worsening Pain
 - Numbness

WATCH FOR LOCAL BURNING SENSATION, THIS IS CAUSED BY PRESSURE. IF ANY OF THE ABOVE ARE PRESENT, CALL THE DOCTOR IMMEDIATELY OR GO TO THE EMERGENCY ROOM.

5. Apply an ice pack to the fracture site (on top of the cast) for 15-20 minutes every hour while awake for the first 24-48 hours after the injury and then needed for swelling.
6. Keep the cast dry:
 - A. Do not take tub baths
 - B. Do not swim with cast
 - C. Do not walk in the rain or let rain dampen the cast.
 - D. If you accidentally get the cast wet, you can dry it with a hairdryer set at cool with NO HEAT (Heat will melt the fiberglass cast)
7. **DO NOT SCRATCH BENEATH THE CAST.** Do not insert any object under the cast for scratching. This may break the skin causing infection.
8. Carefully clean between the toes and fingers with soap and water.
9. If you are placed in an arm cast, elevate your arm above heart level with your fingers toward the ceiling for the first 24-48 hours. If you have a leg cast on, when lying down elevate your leg using multiple pillows during the first 24-48 hours.
10. Do not walk on a leg cast unless a cast boot has been applied and you have been specifically instructed to walk on it. Wait 2 hours after applied before putting weight on a walking cast.
11. Call the Doctor immediately if any foreign object gets into the cast.

**** (434) 793-4711 during office hours or call answering service at (434) 792-3111 after office hours ****