

# Patients with plasters

## How to care for your plaster

It is important that you:

- do not wet, heat or otherwise interfere with your plaster
- do not scratch the skin under the plaster with pens, knitting needles, rulers etc. as this can result in sores
- take extra care during the first 48 hours to allow the plaster to dry properly
- cover the plaster with a tea towel or hand towel and place a plastic bag over the top to reduce condensation when bathing
- check that fingers and/or toes do not slip inside the plaster cast
- keep the plaster firm for good support
  - daily re-bandaging of the plaster is required. You will need to reapply a crepe bandage firmly over the existing bandage every day. Do not remove the original bandage.
  - the nurse will show you how to bandage starting from the fingers or toes and working up the limb
  - you will be given a crepe bandage before leaving hospital.

## Daily activity and ongoing care

It is advised that you:

- encourage active movement of fingers or toes of the affected limb
- do not play any sport
- no sand activities until the plaster is removed, i.e. beach, sand pits, playground
- do not attend school until comfortable
- see a doctor if your child is unsettled, or irritable,
- observe the affected hand/fingers/foot/toes for:
  - temperature – should be warm or slightly cool to touch, same as the opposite limb.
  - skin colour – should be the same as the opposite limb.
  - movement – may be reduced.
  - sensation – should be the same as the opposite limb (report to a doctor if any numbness or pins and needles occur).
  - swelling – swollen toes, hands or fingers should gradually reduce in size over the next few days.



## Pain relief

It is advised that you:

- Give paracetamol, or Ibuprofen for pain if required as per the manufacturer's instructions.
- Report to a doctor if pain is not relieved by the medication.

\*Next dose can be given at \_\_\_\_\_

## Follow-up care

- An appointment for the fracture/plastics clinic will be made within 7–14 days after discharge.
- The plaster cast will usually be reinforced at this appointment rather than replaced with a new cast.
- If your plaster was put on in the emergency department, you will need to go to the GP or return to the emergency department to have the plaster checked within 24 hours of having the plaster put on. This is to make sure the plaster is not too tight.

## Contact

If you have any concerns following discharge please take your child to the GP or return to the PCH Emergency Department.



Government of **Western Australia**  
Child and Adolescent Health Service

**This document can be made available in alternative formats on request for a person with a disability.**

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