

## General Advice

### Altered Sensation

If you experience any altered sensation (pins and needles), increased pain, changed skin colour (red/blue) ELEVATE the limb immediately. If this does not resolve the problem contact the plaster room for advice, or out of hours attend A&E.

### Odours / discharge

Any unpleasant odours or wet patches on the cast (suggesting wound discharge) need to be reported to the plaster room as soon as possible (see back page for contact details).

### Rubbing

If your cast becomes loose and/or feels like it is rubbing your skin, please contact us as soon as possible (see back page for contact details)

### Damage to cast

If your cast becomes cracked or damaged please contact us for repair (see back page for contact details)

## Contact Information

### Plaster Room

01234355122  
Extension 2661

Open Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm  
(Closed bank holidays)

Trauma & Orthopaedic Outpatients  
Bedford Hospital  
Kempston  
Bedford  
MK42 9DJ

**Outside opening hours please  
contact NHS Direct or attend the  
Accident and Emergency Department  
for advice**

**NHS Direct: 08454647**

### Notes:

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**Leaflet produced by M. Ryan Orth Tech cert**

## Plaster Room

**Trauma & Orthopaedic Outpatients  
Information for Patients Treated in a  
Cast**



**This leaflet is designed to reinforce care  
advice given by hospital staff. If you need  
advice not included within this leaflet  
please call the plaster room. (outside of  
office hours you may need to attend the  
Accident and Emergency Department)**

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## General Advice

### Keeping cast dry

All plasters / casts need to be kept DRY. If your plaster / cast becomes wet, you need to contact the plaster room as soon as possible. Water inside the cast can cause the skin to macerate (become soggy and breakdown). Waterproof covers are available to purchase, speak to a member of staff in plaster room for advice. Never use a hair dryer to dry your cast, this may cause burns.

### Driving

Your insurance may not be valid whilst being treated in a cast. The hospital advise you do not drive until the cast is removed, and *you* feel safe to control a vehicle.

### Flying

Many airlines require your cast to be split before you can fly. Please ask plaster room staff for advice.

### Objects in casts

DO NOT place anything inside your cast. Items 'poked' or 'dropped' inside a cast can cause serious skin breakdown. If you accidentally lose an object inside your plaster contact the plaster room as soon as possible.

## Upper Limb

### Jewellery

Rings and bracelets will need to remain off until the cast is removed. Swelling in the hand/fingers can restrict blood supply if jewellery is worn.

### Elevation

The hand on the injured arm needs to be kept raised above the height of the elbow. If the arm is allowed to 'hang' or is rested too low, swelling will occur restricting blood flow. Ask plaster room staff if you are unsure how to do this.

### Movement

To prevent stiffness, and improve circulation it is important to keep joints not held within the cast moving.

### Slings

Not all patients are issued a sling. Slings can prevent movement and cause unnecessary swelling and stiffness. Follow advice from hospital staff regarding the use of any sling and its provision.

## Lower Limb

### Jewellery

Rings and bracelets will need to remain off until the cast is removed. Swelling in the foot/ toes can restrict blood supply if jewellery is worn.

### Elevation

The foot on the injured leg needs to be kept raised above the height of the hip. If the leg is allowed to 'hang' or is rested too low, swelling will occur restricting blood flow. Ask plaster room staff if you are unsure how to do this.

### Movement

To prevent stiffness, and improve circulation it is important to keep joints not held within the cast moving.

### Weight bearing

Only put weight through your injured leg if advised to do so by hospital staff. Follow advice from plaster room team relating to fitting of any plaster shoe.

### Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT)

Immobilising a leg in a cast presents a small risk of a DVT. If you experience and pain in the calf and/ or groin or any shortness of breath attend the A&E department immediately.