**Leg Cast Care**

**Some casts are made for walking.**
- Walking casts must have a cast shoe when walking.
- Crutches or a walker may be ordered for non-walking casts.

**Keep pressure off the heel when resting to avoid pressure sores.**
- Place pillows under the calf, not directly under the heel.

**It is important to elevate the leg throughout the day and night to prevent and reduce swelling.**
- Foot should rest higher than the knee and the heart.

**It is fine to cover toes with a sock to keep the cast clean.**
- Remove frequently to check for blood flow and feeling.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What to watch for</th>
<th>How to look or feel</th>
<th>What to do</th>
<th>When to call</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Swelling in toes or foot</td>
<td>Look at end of cast to see if there is space between cast and skin. Compare healthy side to side with cast.</td>
<td>Elevate the foot above the heart.</td>
<td>Swelling does not improve with elevation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pain</td>
<td>When your child looks uncomfortable, ask what hurts.</td>
<td>Give medication recommended by your provider.</td>
<td>Pain that is worsening or not relieved by medications.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circulation (Blood Flow)</td>
<td>Gently squeeze big toe on side with cast, area will become white and should return to pink within 4 seconds.</td>
<td>Change position to improve blood flow.</td>
<td>Pale or blue color, or if pink color does not return after 4 seconds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of feeling OR movement</td>
<td>Ask if he or she can feel and move each toe when touched. Also, listen for complaints of numbness or tingling (such as “feeling pins or needles”).</td>
<td>Elevate the foot above the heart.</td>
<td>Not able to feel or move toes or continued complaints of numbness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temperature change</td>
<td>Feel toes on both sides of body, they should be similar or slightly different.</td>
<td>Take temperature.</td>
<td>Toes are much colder than other side or fever greater than 101.5 degrees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skin changes</td>
<td>Look around edges of cast.</td>
<td>Change position to reduce pressure.</td>
<td>Open skin around the cast edges.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Odor</td>
<td>Smell area with cast, “dirty sock” smell is normal.</td>
<td>Keep the exposed skin clean with soap on a damp washcloth.</td>
<td>Odors that are concerning to you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor fit</td>
<td>Look at cast to watch for slipping or increasing tightness caused by swelling.</td>
<td>Follow elevation recommendations for swelling.</td>
<td>Swelling that does not improve or concerns for cast slipping too much.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wet cast</td>
<td>Feel cast for dampness after wet activities.</td>
<td>Avoid getting the cast wet.</td>
<td>Cast is wet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broken cast</td>
<td>Look at and feel cast for changes in shape or hardness.</td>
<td>Limit activity until cast has been replaced or repaired.</td>
<td>Any changes to shape or hardness.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Texas Scottish Rite Hospital for Children • North Campus**
7000 West Plano Parkway • Suite 110 • Plano, Texas 75093
Sports Medicine: 469-515-7100 • Fax: 469-515-7101
Fracture and Orthopedics Clinic: 469-515-7200 • Fax: 469-515-7201
**Cast Care for Kids**

**What does a cast do?**
- Keeps your knee or ankle from moving.
- Helps broken bones get better.
- Protects where you had surgery.

**Will I feel different after I get my cast?**
- Your pain should get better every day.
- Your toes may get puffy after getting a cast.
  - Rest your leg on a pillow, with your foot above your heart, when this happens.
- Your leg may feel "skinny" after a few weeks.

**What can I DO while I have a cast?**
- Move your body, but you must follow your provider’s instructions for activities.
- Take care of your cast.
- Tell an adult if anything feels or looks different.
- Cover your cast with a plastic bag when you take a bath or shower.

**What should I NOT DO while I have a cast?**
- Do not get the cast wet.
- Do not put anything in the cast, even to scratch an itch.
- Do not do anything that will change your cast or the soft materials inside.