

Department of  
**NURSING**

## How to Care for My Upper Limb Cast?



## What are Cast and Splints?

Cast and splint are used to protect, support broken bone(s) or joint(s) as it heals. Its purpose is to prevent movement as the bone(s) is/are healing.

## What are the Different Types of Cast and Splints?

### Half Cast / Backslab

Put on temporary while waiting for the swelling of the limb(s) to subside.



### Full Cast

Applied after the swelling has been reduced.

However, this cast may be removed and changed when it becomes too loose or tight.



### Ready-made Thermoplastic Splints

Removable splints may be used when the fracture is healing and becomes more stable.



## How do you Remove a Full Cast?

The full cast is removed using an electric cast cutter. This is a special saw meant to remove casts.

It has a dull blade that moves from side to side and creates vibrations that break the cast.

The vibrations will not cut your skin. However, it creates noise and heat during the process. Do tell us if you feel the heat.

Do not move your limb immediately after the cast is removed as the fracture may not be completely healed.



Swelling of the arms may cause pressure injury when your arm is in the cast.

## What can You do to Reduce Swelling?

Keep your arm upright and above the heart will help the blood flow back to the heart and reduce the swelling.

Use an arm sling to support the arm. You should only stop using the arm sling when advised by the doctor/nurse.



Keep your arm in an upright position when sitting down or when it is not supported by an arm sling.



Keep your arm above the heart level while lying in bed or supported with pillows when not using the arm sling.



## When Should You Seek Help for Excessive Swelling?

Perform daily checks on the colour and exposed areas of skin and fingers that are not covered in cast.

Do seek help immediately when you experience the following:

- When the cast feels too tight even after keeping it elevated
- Numbness or tingling sensation
- Skin becomes cold, pale and with a bluish tinge
- Increased pain or swelling
- Skin underneath or around the edge of the cast feels sore
- There is an unpleasant smell or discharge

## Additional Situations When You Should Seek Help:

When the cast is:

- Loose
- Damaged
- Cracked
- Wet and does not dry
- Has rough edges that hurt

## How Should You Take Care of the Cast?



Relieve the itch by blowing air on both ends using a hair drying on a cool mode.

**Do not** put things in the cast when you feel itchy as this may cut your skin and cause an infection.

**Do not** trim or cut the cast as it will weaken the support.



**Do not** apply powder into the opening as it may irritate the skin under the cast.

Powder can also cake up when in contact with the moisture from the skin.



Keep the cast dry.

Moisture can irritate the skin and weaken the cast.

Use wet wipes if you need to wash your hands.



Protect the cast with plastic bag or cling wrap before taking a shower.

## What are Some Daily Exercises That You can do?

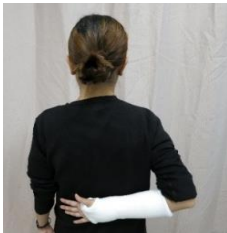
Exercise any joints that are not covered by the cast such as your elbow and fingers to help improve the blood flow and the healing process.



Straight Arm Raises



Put your hand behind the head



Put your hand behind the back



Closing your palm



Opening your palm



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Consulting Hours:  
Mon – Fri - 9.30am to 5pm.  
Sat, Sun & Public Holiday Closed

If you experience any problems,  
please contact Casting  
Room: 68894030

Proceed to the nearest Emergency  
Department after office hour.



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