

Going Home in a Cast

What do I need to know while the cast is on?

- **Keep the cast dry.** Water causes the padding inside the cast to get wet and may hurt the skin. A sponge bath is recommended while the cast is on.
- **It is OK to write on the cast.**
- **Do not stick anything down the cast,** even if the skin feels itchy. It might get stuck or cut the skin. This could cause an infection.
- **Do not pull the padding out of the cast.** The padding protects the skin while the cast is on and when it is taken off.
- **Keep dirt and sand away from the cast.**
- **If you were told it is ok to walk with a leg cast** on, a special shoe to protect the cast will be provided.
- **Quiet activities are encouraged** while the cast is on. This reduces the risk of falling and causing further injury. **Avoid** activities that involve:
 - Balls.
 - Wheels. This includes bikes, skateboards, and scooters.
 - Trampolines, slides, and swings. Keep feet on the ground!
- **Go to school or daycare** unless your child's doctor or nurse tells you not to go. A cast will not normally cause you to miss school.



When should I call?

Call our nurse line right away if any of the following occurs.

- The cast gets wet.
- Fingers or toes fall asleep, feel numb, or swell. If any of these happen, lift the casted arm or leg above the level of the heart.
- There is new pain or pain under the cast that gets worse.
- The cast feels too loose or too tight.
- There is drainage coming through the cast.
- There is an open sore around the edge of the cast.
- Something was put inside of the cast by accident.
- The cast breaks, cracks, or seems soft.

Cast removal



The cast is removed with a special saw that makes a very loud noise. It cuts through the outer cast with a disk that vibrates.

Clinic staff can show how the saw works before the cast is cut off.

Remember, the cotton padding protects the skin from the heat of the saw. Do not pull the padding out or get it wet.

After the cast is cut open with the saw, the padding will be cut off with a scissors.



To view a video of a cast being removed go to: chw.org/cast.

Risks

There are some possible risks with casting. These risks include, cast saw burn or cut, pressure sore, and skin irritation. Remember, the cotton padding protects the skin from the heat of the saw. Do not pull out or push down the padding. Do not get the padding wet.

Following these guidelines will reduce the risk.

Call the nurse line with any questions or concerns you have.

CHW Milwaukee nurse line: 414-266-2411.

This teaching sheet does not take the place of medical care. Talk with your healthcare provider for diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up.