



Information for  
patients and  
carers

## Plasters and Casts

### Discharge Information

# Instructions for after the application of a Plaster

The cast will be dry in:

- 30 minutes to 1 hour, if fibreglass.
- 24 – 48 hours, if plaster of Paris.
- Elevate the limb for 48 hours or as instructed.
- Do not get your cast wet unless advised otherwise.
- Do not walk on your cast until advised.
- Do not push anything down the cast to scratch an itch.
- Do not drive with a cast on - we advise you check with your insurance company, as your insurance company may not cover you.
- A cast shoe must be used if you have a walking cast on.
- If your fingers or toes become swollen, painful, blue or cold, elevate the limb and please report back to the Emergency Department (ED) at once. These symptoms usually indicate the plaster is too tight and needs to be loosened or replaced.
- If you have a cast on and are planning to fly we advise you to check with your airline company prior to your flight, as the airline may not allow you to fly or request alterations be made to your cast prior to your flight.

## You may be asked to return the following day for a plaster check

Times for plaster checks are as follows, unless advised otherwise:

### **Chorley**

Monday to Friday 2 pm– 4 pm

Weekends and Bank holidays, as arranged

### **Preston**

Monday to Friday 9am – 5 pm

Weekends and Bank holidays 2pm – 5 pm

**If you encounter a problem with these times please discuss with the plaster technician or nurse.**

## Pressure ulcers from medical devices or plaster casts

### What is a pressure ulcer and how they develop?

A pressure ulcer is localised injury to the skin and/or underlying tissue usually over a bony prominence, as a result of pressure.

Pressure ulcers can develop when pressure is applied to an area of the skin over a period of time. The extra pressure disrupts the flow of blood through the skin. Without a blood supply, the affected skin becomes starved of oxygen and nutrients and begins to break down.

## Who is at risk of developing pressure ulcers?

People are at risk of developing pressure ulcers if they have difficulty moving and are unable to easily change position while seated or in bed. Therefore, the risk of developing a pressure ulcer could be increased for people who are in a plaster cast.

### To reduce the risk we advise:

- The position of the plaster casted limb must be changed frequently.
- Ensure the top and bottom of the cast is not rubbing or leaving red marks on the skin.
- Ensure all toes/fingers are able to move freely.
- Regularly change your position, turn at least every two hours.
- If you are in a leg cast and turning on your side, place a pillow in between the knees to prevent the cast rubbing on the other leg.
- Do not rest the leg on the heel for long periods. To relieve pressure from the heel place a pillow length ways so the heel is floating.

Immediately contact Fracture Clinic Monday-Friday 9.00am-5.00pm or the Emergency Department if you experience any of the following:

- Feeling a rubbing or a blister like pain or any discomfort within the cast
- Complaining of something wet or sticky inside the plaster cast.
- If the plaster develops a smell.
- Any staining developed on the outside of the cast.
- Areas of pain or localised heat.

## Further advice and instructions for patients with Plasters and casts on the lower limbs

On rare occasion, symptoms of swollen, painful, blue or cold toes might suggest the development of a clot in the veins of a lower limb (Deep Vein Thrombosis or DVT), which is rare but a recognised complication of immobilisation of a leg in cast. The Nurse Practitioner or Doctor will be able to tell you whether it is likely that you may develop a DVT or not, after they have examined you. If so they will inform you of any further investigations that may be required.

A percentage of patients developing a DVT go on to develop a more serious complication known as “Pulmonary Embolism”, where the blood clot that has formed in the leg vein breaks off and becomes lodged in the blood vessels in the lung.

**If you experience chest pain and breathlessness you must report back to ED at once for further assessment, examination and investigations.**

## Contact details

**If you have any problems with your plaster cast please contact the appropriate plaster room or ED**

## Chorley

Monday to Friday 9am -5pm - **Plaster Room 01257245798**

After 5pm, weekends and Bank Holidays - **Chorley ED 01257 245219**

## Preston

Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm - **Plaster Room 01772 523 349**

After 5 pm, Weekends and Bank Holidays **Preston ED 01772 522 878**

### Some useful telephone/e-mail addresses

Limbo Waterproof Protectors (for baths/showers)

Tel: 01243 573417

Email: [info@limboproducts.co.uk](mailto:info@limboproducts.co.uk)

Website: [www.limboproducts.co.uk](http://www.limboproducts.co.uk)

British Red Cross Mobility Service

Tel: 0300 456 1914

Website: [www.redcross.org.uk](http://www.redcross.org.uk)

National Osteoporosis Society

Tel: 01761 471771

Email: [info@nos.org.uk](mailto:info@nos.org.uk) .

Website: [www.nos.org.uk](http://www.nos.org.uk)

### Sources of further information

[www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk](http://www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk)

[www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

[www.patient.co.uk](http://www.patient.co.uk)

[www.accessable.co.uk](http://www.accessable.co.uk)

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Please ask if you would like help in understanding this information. This information can be made available in large print and in other languages.

**Cantonese:**

如果你希望以另外一種格式接收該資訊，請和我們聯絡，不必猶豫。

**Gujarati:**

જો તમને આ માહિતી બીજી રચના કે ફોર્મેટમાં મેળવવાની ઈચ્છા હોય, તો કૃપા કરી અમારો સંપર્ક કરતા અચકાશો નહિ.

**Hungarian:**

Kérjük, vegye fel velünk a kapcsolatot, ha más formában kéri ezt az információt.

**Polish:**

Jeżeli chciał(a)by Pan/Pani otrzymać niniejsze informacje w innym formacie, prosimy o kontakt.

**Punjabi:**

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਫਾਰਮੈਟ ਵਿਚ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਲੈਣਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ ਤਾਂ ਸਾਡੇ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰਨ ਤੋਂ ਨਾ ਝਿਜਕੋ।

**Urdu:**

اگر آپ اس معلومات کو کسی اور صورت میں حاصل کرنا چاہتے ہیں تو برائے مہربانی ہم سے رابطہ کرنے میں ہچکچاہٹ محسوس نہ کریں۔

## **Lancashire Teaching Hospitals is a smoke-free site.**

On 31 May 2017 Lancashire Teaching Hospitals became a smoke-free organisation. From that date smoking is not permitted anywhere on any of our premises, either inside or outside the buildings. Our staff will ask you about your smoking status when you come to hospital and will offer you support and advice about stopping smoking including Nicotine Replacement Therapy to help manage your symptoms of withdrawal.

If you want to stop smoking you can also contact the Quit Squad Freephone 0800 328 6297.

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**Division:** Surgery

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