

Your cast protects and supports your bone while it heals. This type of cast **must be kept completely dry at all times**. Moisture can cause skin irritation and infection, and can damage the cast.

SHOWERING & BATHING

✓ Do

- Cover the cast completely with a **waterproof cast protector** or thick plastic bag before showering or bathing.
- Seal the top tightly with waterproof tape or a rubber band on the skin **above** the cast (not over the cast itself), so water can't run inside.
- Keep your limb out of the direct shower spray.
- If water gets on the cast, pat it dry straight away with a towel, and use a hairdryer on a cool setting to dry the edges.

✗ Do not

- Put your cast in water, such as a bath, swimming pool or spa.
- Rely on plastic wrap or a shopping bag alone. These aren't fully waterproof.
- Let water run down your arm or leg towards the cast.
- Use hot air to dry the cast. It can cause burns or damage the padding.

SKIN & COMFORT

✓ Do

- Keep the skin around the cast edges clean and dry.
- If your skin gets itchy, tap gently on the outside of the cast, or use a hairdryer on a cool setting.
- Check the skin around the cast edges every day for redness, sores or irritation.
- Raise the limb above the level of your heart for the first few days, to reduce swelling.
- Wiggle your fingers or toes often, to help your circulation.

✗ Do not

- Push anything (such as pens, coat hangers or cotton buds) inside the cast to scratch. This can damage your skin and cause infection.
- Use lotions, creams or powders inside or near the cast.
- Try to cut, trim or remove the cast yourself.

MANAGING SWELLING & DISCOMFORT

- **Ice:** put ice in a plastic bag, wrap it in a towel, and place it over the cast for 15–20 minutes every 2–3 hours for the first few days.
- **Raise the limb** on pillows when resting or sleeping.
- Take pain relief as advised, such as paracetamol or ibuprofen.
- Keep food, sand and small objects away from the cast.

If your limb swells and the cast feels tight, raise it and apply ice over the cast for 15–20 minutes. If it still feels tight, call us.

Call the fracture clinic if

- Your fingers or toes become numb, tingly, cold, pale or blue
- You have increasing pain or swelling under the cast
- There is a bad smell coming from the cast (after the first few days)
- The cast lining stays wet for more than **4–6 hours**, even after drying
- You develop blisters, open wounds or a rash near the cast edges
- The cast cracks, breaks, softens or becomes loose

Phone (07) 5346 8000 · Email fracture@balanceortho.com.au

Outside clinic hours: if you have any of the symptoms above and can't reach the clinic, go to your nearest emergency department.

FOLLOW-UP

- Please **attend all of your scheduled fracture clinic appointments.**
- Your cast will be removed in the clinic once healing is complete, usually after 4–8 weeks.
- Rehabilitation, physiotherapy or hand therapy may be recommended once your cast is off.