

Long Leg Cast Care and Exercises



Your Cast

Your leg has been injured and you need to be in a cast for a period of time to allow the injury to heal.

While the cast is on:

DO

- ✓ Keep your cast clean and dry.
- ✓ When showering to keep your cast dry:
 1. wrap a towel around the cast to absorb any water that may leak in.
 2. place a plastic bag over the cast and seal with tape to ensure a snug fit to avoid any leaks.
- ✓ Check with your insurance company to see if you are able to drive without affecting your insurance.

DO NOT :

- ✗ Insert any objects under the cast to scratch an itch. If you place objects under the cast you could get a skin wound that could lead to an infection. Instead, tap on the outside of the cast over the itch.
- ✗ Place any additional padding inside the cast.
- ✗ Break off or trim the edges of the cast, or try to repair the cast.

If you are having any of the problems with the cast, listed below:

- ✗ Rubbing on the skin or you feel burning under the cast
- ✗ It feels too tight
- ✗ It becomes loose, cracks or breaks
- ✗ If you notice any unusual smells from the cast (some odour is normal),

Then you should go to the Emergency Department to have your cast looked at as it may need to be adjusted.

Swelling

After any injury or surgery to your leg, your foot and ankle will swell.

You should:

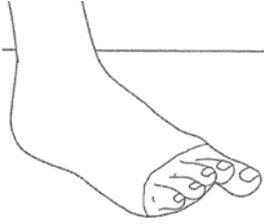
- ✓ Keep the injured leg elevated by placing your foot on a stool where your foot is higher than your knee.
- ✓ Move your toes for five minutes every hour to help maintain circulation to your foot and reduce swelling.

If the swelling is not improving or you feel numbness and tingling that is not relieved after 15 minutes of elevation and exercise then you need to come to the Emergency Department to get the cast changed.

Exercises

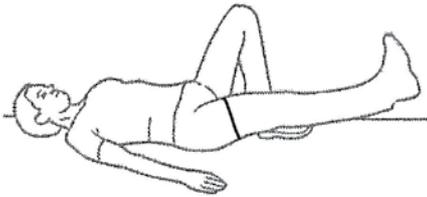
When you have a cast on your leg, your joints become stiff and your muscles become tight and weak. To help keep all the other joints around the cast moving, we recommend doing the exercises below three times a day.

If you are feeling strong pain stop the exercises and check with your physiotherapist or orthopaedic doctor before starting again.



Move your toes up and down for around 60 seconds.
Repeat 3 to 5 times.

If you feel they are very stiff you can use your hand to move the toes backward and forward.



Lift your injured leg about 10 centimetres off the bed. Do this until tired or up to 10 times.



Stand straight holding on to a chair. Bring your leg backwards. Do not lean forwards. Do this until tired or up to 10 times.



Lift your leg out to the side to keep your hip strong. Do this until tired or up to 10 times.

For any questions contact Physiotherapy Departments on the following phone numbers:

Gosford
4320 3314

Wyong
4394 8217

Woy Woy
4344 8446

Long Jetty
4336 7752

This brochure contains general information for patients being treated at Central Coast Local Health District. It is not a substitute for more detailed information from the Orthopaedic and Physiotherapy Department (OPD). If any exercise causes more than mild discomfort, stop and seek advice from the OPD.