



University Hospitals Birmingham
NHS Foundation Trust



Plaster of Paris/ synthetic casts

Building healthier lives

UHB is a no smoking Trust

Advice and information about your cast

Your arm/leg has been put into a plaster cast to rest/protect the injury whilst it heals. It is important you look after the cast to help you heal and prevent problems.

Plaster of Paris is fully dry after 24 hours. Synthetic plaster is fully dry after one hour.

Please make sure you do not lean on the cast or allow it to press on anything hard until it is dry as this may cause an indentation on the cast which may press against your skin.

Please make sure you keep your limb elevated as directed. If allowed to hang down, injured limbs in plaster casts will become swollen and the plaster will become tight.

You must move all joints, especially toes and fingers regularly to prevent stiffness. For example if you have broken your wrist, you need to move your fingers, elbow and shoulder joints regularly.

Please take pain relieving medication as directed. If your pain is not well controlled please discuss with your general practitioner (GP) or with the staff at your next clinic appointment.

Whilst immobilized in a leg cast if you experience a dull ache or severe cramp like pain in the calf area or shortness of breath this could be a sign of a DVT (blood clot) please contact emergency department.

Please do not

- Put anything down your plaster cast (for example knitting needles) as it may cause damage to your skin inside your cast. This includes powders or sprays
- Remove any of the padding from your plaster cast as this may damage your skin underneath
- Cut your plaster cast or try to remove or alter it

- Get your cast wet. Waterproof cast covers to help you bath are available but the hospital are not able to provide you with one of these. Further information can be obtained from the plaster room staff
- Wear rings on fingers on your injured arm if you have a plaster cast on it

Driving with a plaster cast may invalidate your insurance therefore we advise you to speak to your insurance company before doing so.

Please contact the Plaster Room or the Emergency Department if you are worried or experience any of the following:

- Intense pain which is not relieved when the limb is raised
- Excessive swelling or discolouration, in your toes and fingers which does not reduce when the limb is raised
- Prolonged periods of numbness or pins and needles in the plastered limb
- If your plaster cast becomes cracked or broken
- If your plaster cast is rubbing (for example over a bony joint) you can see any blisters, or experience a burning type pain
- You have a discharge, wetness, or an unpleasant smell from under your cast. A sweaty smell is normal

Contact details

Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham

Plaster Room in Fracture Clinic (Outpatients Area 4)
can be contacted Monday–Friday, 09:00–16:00

Tel: **0121 371 5478**

Outside of these hours, please contact:

Emergency Department: **0121 371 2600**

Good Hope Hospital

Plaster Room can be contacted Monday–Friday, 09:00–16:00

Tel: **0121 424 9242**

Outside of these hours, please contact:

Emergency Department: **0121 424 7699**

Heartlands Hospital

Plaster Room can be contacted Monday–Friday, 09:00–16:00

Tel: **0121 424 1265**

Outside of these hours, please contact:

Emergency Department: **0121 424 3263**

Solihull Hospital

Plaster Room can be contacted Monday–Friday, 09:00–16:00

Tel: **0121 424 4228**

Out of these hours, please contact:

Emergency Department: **0121 424 4226**

If you require this information in another format, such as a different language, large print, braille or audio version please ask a member of staff or email **interpreting.service@uhb.nhs.uk**.

Trauma and Orthopaedics

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