



**The Purpose of your Cast:**  
Your cast is applied to immobilize your bones, ligaments, and muscles in the proper position to promote healing. The cast permits early activity. The following instructions will help you take care of your casted extremity.

Avoid water contact and keep your cast dry.

**Reason:**  
Water causes your cast to soften and break. Skin problems could also occur.

Avoid putting anything inside your cast, including sand, dirt, powder, or any type of object to scratch the skin.

**Reason:**  
Skin irritation and possible infection could result.

Avoid painting, varnishing, or polishing your cast.

**Reason:**  
The cast is unable to breathe  
And skin problems can result

Avoid breakage and/or dents in your cast

**Reason:**  
Most 3-M or fiberglass casts take ½ hour to dry. During this time, **do not** rest your cast on any sharp object



### **Complications:**

**Swelling:** an injury has occurred and some swelling is expected.

**Prevention:**

Lie down, support the extremity with pillows and elevate it higher than the level of your heart so blood can return to your heart and not to the injured extremity. Exercising toes and/or fingers will also help to decrease swelling.

**Pain:** Localized pain in the area of the fracture or injury is normal for the first few days.

**Prevention:**

Elevate the extremity. If medication is prescribed, use as directed. Ice bags can be applied on cast to help reduce pain/swelling.

**Itching:** do not put anything inside your cast; the protective padding between the cast and your skin could be disrupted and skin irritation and possible infection could result.

**Prevention:** Aiming a hair dryer on the COOL setting into your cast or rubbing the opposite extremity in the same place will help.

Report any severe pain, pressure, or persistent burning to your physician immediately.



### **Call your doctor if any of the following occur:**

- **Casted hand looks blue and feels colder than the other hand.**
- **Swelling of hand is not relieved by elevation.**
- **Difficulty moving hand**
- **Fingers feel numb or tingle.**
- **Increasing pain or pressure.**
- **Any new drainage on your cast.**
- **Foul or unusual odor from your cast.**
- **Cast becomes loose or any portion is damaged**
  - (dented, cracked, softened, broken or wet)