



## Information for patients, relatives and carers

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# Plaster and Casts

Plaster casts are made up of a bandage and a hard covering. They allow broken bones in the arm or leg to heal by holding them in place, and usually need to stay on for between four and 12 weeks. Taking good care of your cast will help ensure a better recovery.

The plaster is not fully dry for 48hours (one hour for fibreglass) and you should treat it carefully until then.

When walking with a fractured wrist or forearm, keep your fingers above the level of your elbow.

When bathing it is important to **keep the cast dry at all times**. Moisture can cause it to crumble and become weak.

### If you have a wrist fracture

- ✓ Wear your sling for 24hours
- ✓ Do exercise your fingers and unaffected joints on the limb that has a fracture

### If you have a foot/ankle fracture

- ✓ When sitting keep your leg raised so that your foot is higher than your hip. Support the leg with cushions, rolled towels or pillows.

### You should not:

- ✗ Poke anything down the inside your cast. It may get stuck and can cut off the blood circulation or you can damage/cut the skin.
- ✗ Walk on the plaster unless you have been told you can. N.B. If you have a weight bearing cast, you must wear the shoe provided (indoors and outdoors).

## Contact the Plaster Room if:

- The plaster is uncomfortable or is hurting you because it is too tight/loose or is rubbing.
- The plaster becomes soft or cracks.
- There is excessive swelling below your cast.
- There is greyness/blueness or other bruising below the cast.
- You suffer prolonged pins and needles.
- You suffer intense pain which is not relieved when the limb is raised.
- You are unable to move your fingers/toes.
- You experience numbness, loss of feeling or unusual coldness
- The skin underneath or around the edge of your cast feels sore
- There is an unpleasant smell or discharge coming from your cast

If the Plaster Room is closed, go to your nearest Emergency Department for **urgent** further assessment.

Please return all equipment immediately to the hospital when it is no longer needed. Remember - you needed it and someone else will too.

**York plaster room:** 01904 726 523

**Scarborough plaster room:** 01723 342 042

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① If you have further concerns about your condition, please contact your GP. If you are not sure what to do, call 111 or get help from 111 online:  
<https://111.nhs.uk/> When to use NHS 111 online or call 111 - NHS ([www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk))

## Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

We can listen to feedback (positive or negative), answer questions and help resolve any concerns about Trust services.

PALS can be contacted on 01904 726262, or email [yhs-tr.PatientExperienceTeam@nhs.net](mailto:yhs-tr.PatientExperienceTeam@nhs.net).

An answer phone is available out of hours.

## Leaflets in alternative languages or formats

If you require this information in a different language or format, for example Braille, large print, Easy Read or audio, please ask the staff who are looking after you.

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