

## GREATER ROCHESTER ORTHOPAEDICS, PC

### CAST CARE

You've just been given a cast made of fiberglass. This cast will hold your arm or leg in place to help it heal. During the coming days and weeks, the way you treat your cast can play a big part in how fast and how well you heal. For the best results, follow the cast care tips on this handout.

### Keep the cast dry

A wet cast can become soft. Then it can't hold your limb in place. A wet cast can also cause infections or rashes. To keep your cast dry, do the following:

- Bathe as directed by your health care provider. When you bathe, keep your cast out of water and covered with plastic or ask about our Procel water resistant cast liner.
- If part of the cast gets slightly damp, pat it dry with a towel. If a fiberglass cast gets damp, you can dry it with a cool setting on a blow dryer.
- If your cast gets wet, call your health care provider.

### Handle with Care

For the best results, remember the following:

#### DO

- *DO* keep the cast clean and dry. Cover it with plastic to protect it when around dirt or water.
- *DO* use any support you are given, such as crutches or a sling.
- *DO* elevate the cast above your heart whenever possible.

#### DON'T

- *DON'T* slide anything inside the cast. This can cause infection.
- *DON'T* put lotions or powders around the cast or inside it.
- *DON'T* bang the cast.
- *DON'T* cut the cast or pull it apart.
- *DON'T* wash the cast.

## **Tips for Comfort**

Here are a few ways to stay comfortable:

- To relieve pain and reduce swelling, keep the cast raised (above your heart if possible).
- Wiggle your toes or fingers to improve blood flow.
- If you itch, don't scratch inside the cast. To relieve itching, raise the cast or change positions. You can also try using a blow dryer set on "cool".
- If your toes or fingers get cold, raise them and cover them with a sock or a blanket.

## **When to Call Us**

Call us if you notice any of the following:

- Increased pain or swelling, or you can't wiggle your toes or fingers
- Your fingers or toes change color, tingle, or feel cold to the touch
- The cast is too tight or too loose or has something stuck inside
- A cracked, dented, soft, or wet spot on your cast
- Redness or chafing around the edge of the cast
- Bad odor from the cast or itching that won't stop