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## When You Have a Cast

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### Drying

- A cast takes 24 to 48 hours to dry all the way through. The time depends on the material used to make the cast.

### Keep your cast up

- Keep the cast up to help reduce pain and swelling. The injured limb should be higher than the rest of your body. You can do this by resting the limb on a pillow.
- Exercise your fingers and toes 4 to 5 times a day. Move them in all directions at least 5 times, each time you exercise. This moves the blood around to promote healing and reduce swelling.

### Walking and taking care of your cast

- ✗ Do not walk on your cast unless you are told to. If you have a walking cast, wait 48 hours before walking on it.
- ✗ Do not scratch the skin under the cast.
- ✗ Do not get the cast wet. A soft or wet cast does not protect an injured limb.
- When taking a bath or shower, cover the cast with a plastic bag. Tape the bag on well so the cast will not get wet. Some drug stores sell special cast covers for bathing and showering. If your cast gets wet, use the low setting on a hair dryer to dry it.

### Contact the Fracture and Orthopaedic Clinic or go to an Emergency Department if you have any of these problems and elevating the limb has not helped:

- limb feels tight, numb or tingles
- skin is bluish or white
- limb is swollen
- severe pain
- limb feels like “pins and needles”
- Call if you see oozing or discharge through the cast or the cast smells bad.

**Fracture and Orthopaedic Clinic at St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton**

Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 3:45 p.m.

905-522-1155 ext. 33271

You may not be able to drive with a cast and maintain insurance coverage. Make sure you contact your insurance company to see if you have coverage for driving.