

## Cast Care Instructions

To provide the utmost protection and comfort, you must take precautions against damaging or altering your cast. If it is not properly cared for you may delay healing. The following information outlines some of the many precautions you should take while wearing a cast.

### **DON'T**

- Get your cast wet
- Remove padding
- Insert anything under your cast
- Alter or trim your cast
- Drill or punch holes in your cast
- Remove your cast

### **REMEMBER THE RICE PRINCIPLE**

R = Rest	Rest and limit physical activity. Walking or weight bearing before the doctor instructs you can lead to injury and/or may delay healing
I = Ice	Apply ice to the injured area for 15-20 minutes every 1 1/2 - 2 hours. Make sure that you place a towel between the ice pack and your skin. A pack of frozen peas or corn usually work well as ice packs.
C = Circulation	Check for blood return (capillary refill) to the extremities. Pinch the toe/toes of the affected area until discolored. After you release the toe/toes, the blood supply (color) should return after 3 seconds or less. If over 3 seconds, you should contact us at the number provided below.
E = Elevation	Elevation is the most important of the principles. "Proper" elevation is as such. Make sure that your knee is in a "locked" position with your foot significantly higher than your hip. If your leg is not properly elevated, swelling will remain and you will be very uncomfortable.

### **It is possible that you might experience these problems:**

- The cast becomes too tight or too snug
- The cast becomes loose, broken, or cracked
- The toes below the cast become painful, numb, difficult or impossible to move
- You develop localized pain under your cast, particularly if the pain feels like a rock or burning sensation

If you have a problem with your cast make sure to contact the Foot and Ankle Surgery Clinic at 707-566-5920 during business hours. Business hours are Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. (closed for lunch from 12:30 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.). If after hours or on weekends, call the Emergency Department at 707-393-4800.