**SURGICAL SERVICES**

**Post-Operative Instructions**

**Care of your cast**

Your cast is designed to give you support and to prevent movement of your limb while the healing process is taking place. For the first few days, you will be constantly aware of your cast. This is normal and you will adapt to it.   
Take frequent rest periods during the first 24-48 hours to allow for healing.

1. **In Bed**

* Keep arm or leg elevated on a pillow (protect the cast while it is damp).
* The affected limb should be elevated higher than the rest of the body.

1. **Out of Bed**

* Elevation of the affected limb will help decrease the swelling and pain   
  at the site of injury.
* Keep your affected arm elevated on pillows, higher than your heart to prevent swelling.
* Elevate the affected leg on a chair or ottoman (stool) while sitting.

1. **Exercise**

* Move the fingers or toes for several minutes every half hour to increase circulation, to reduce swelling and to prevent joint stiffness.

1. **Cast**

* It can take up to 48-72 hours for the cast to dry completely depending   
  on the air humidity and thickness of the cast. Do not rest your cast on   
  a hard surface until it is dry to prevent deformation.
* Keep the cast dry at all times.
* Do not put anything inside the cast.
* Do not attempt to scratch under the cast for any reason; it may break the skin and lead to an infection.
* Do not put any lotions or powders inside the cast.
* Do not attempt to adjust or trim your own cast.
* If you have been prescribed an air cast, it should be worn at all times unless your surgeon has indicated it can be removed for bathing and/or sleeping.

CONTINUED ON OTHER SIDE 🡪

Information is available in alternate formats upon request

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

**Call your surgeon or go to the nearest Emergency Department immediately if you notice any of the following:**

* Increasing tightness of cast.
* Numbness of fingers or toes.
* Swelling of fingers or toes.
* Blueness or whiteness of fingers or toes.
* Severe pain in the limb.
* “Pins and needles” sensation of the fingers or toes.
* If the cast gets wet, soft, cracks or there is a break or rough edge which is irritating the skin.
* If there is oozing from the surgical site underneath the cast.
* If there is a foul odor from your cast.
* Fever, shortness of breath or chest pain/ chest discomfort.

FOLLOW-UP:

Your surgeon will advise you of your follow-up appointment the day of your surgery. If you are a Day Surgery patient, a nurse from the Day Surgery Unit will call you the day after your surgery to discuss any concerns. When your cast is removed, it will be done with a specially designed cast saw that will cut through the cast, but not through the padding underneath. The skin is protected. Cast removal is fast and does not cause any discomfort.

The information contained on this sheet is provided to you and your family to help you in your recovery from this procedure. This document is not intended to replace medical advice from your doctor or healthcare team. If you require more specific/additional medical advice, contact your doctor and healthcare team about your particular healthcare needs.

Protect yourself! Clean your hands frequently using soap and water or

hand sanitizer and ask that your healthcare providers and visitors do the same." Clean hands save lives.