Waterproof Arm Cast

A cast was placed on your child for ________________________________________.

Your child’s cast is made of Gore-Tex® lining and fiberglass. The Gore-Tex® lining makes
the cast waterproof.

**Home Care:**

Allow 6 hours for your child’s cast to dry. During the time your child’s cast is drying, keep
the cast uncovered. Do not allow the cast to rest against any hard surfaces while it is
drying. This will cause damage to the cast which may result in skin sores under the cast.
**DO NOT WRITE ON THE CAST UNTIL THE CAST IS COMPLETELY DRY.**

The fiberglass warms up during the hardening process and this warmth causes the air
pockets in the waterproof lining to expand. This expansion causes the cast to feel tight and
may cause swelling or color change in the patient’s fingers. The swelling or change in color
usually goes away within 1 hour, or when the casting material is no longer warm. If the
swelling or discoloration continues past 1 hour, or if the condition worsens, contact the
Orthopedic Clinic.

Keep the arm with the cast raised above the level of your child’s heart for the first 24-48
hours by resting it on a pillow or by using a sling if your doctor prescribes a sling. This will
help with swelling and pain. After 48 hours the sling may be worn for comfort.

Check your child’s fingers (on the injured arm) at least every 4 hours. Check to see if your
child’s fingers are warm, pink and able to move. Also check to see if the fingers are swollen
or if the swelling gets worse.

Once the cast is dry, you may place a cold pack on the cast to decrease the pain and
swelling. If your child is older than 6 months, you may give your child acetaminophen
(Tylenol®) or ibuprofen (Advil® or Motrin®) for pain relief. Be sure to check the package
for the amount to give your child based on his weight and age. Do not give more than 5
doses of acetaminophen or 4 doses of ibuprofen in 24 hours. Do not give the medication for
more than 3 days without calling your doctor.

The waterproof lining inside the cast repels water from the child’s skin. Because of this, your
child may shower or bathe normally in their cast, and may swim in their cast if approved by
their doctor. Do not allow your child’s cast to be immersed in water for more than 2 to 3
hours at a time. Prolonged exposure to water can cause your child’s cast to break down.
Your child’s cast should not be exposed to lake or pond water. After bathing and/or
swimming, rinse the cast with clean running water for 15 to 20 seconds.

After bathing or swimming, your child’s cast will drip-dry for up to 1 hour. You may wrap a
towel around the cast to absorb the water and/or prop the cast up to allow for drainage.
Do not allow your child to put objects inside the cast. This will cause skin irritation and may cause skin sores under the cast. Do not put the following items in your child’s cast.

- Powder
- Lotion
- Fragranced soap
- Oils or greases
- Dirt and sand
- Solvents
- Do not spray any perfume/odor remover on the child’s cast.

If any of the above objects do enter your child’s cast, rinse cast out with clean running water for 1 to 2 minutes.

You may use a hair dryer (on cold setting) to relieve itching. Blow the air against the cast over the itchy area. You may also give diphenhydramine (Benadryl®) by mouth for itching. Be sure to follow your doctor’s orders and the package directions for the amount to give your child. Do not allow your child to put any object such as a pencil, ruler, hanger, etc. in the cast to relieve itching. When put into a cast, these items can cause sores and scratches on the skin that may get infected.

Call your doctor or the Children’s Mercy Hospital Information Line at (816) 234-3188 if:

- Your child has increased swelling to fingers not relieved by elevating the arm above the level of the heart.
- Your child’s finger’s have a blue or white color.
- Your child complains of coldness, burning sensation, numbness or tingling of fingers.
- Your child is unable to move his fingers.
- The cast looks too tight.
- An object gets into the cast.
- There is a foul smell or drainage from/on the cast.
- You see a sore on the skin at the edge of the cast.
- Your child complains of severe pain or cries often.
- Your child’s cast slips or comes off.
- There is a crack, break, or softening of the cast.
- You have any questions or concerns regarding your child’s cast or arm.