

BROOMSTICK CAST CARE

A Broomstick cast (or Petrie Cast) is used to keep the ball of the femur (the thigh bone) in the hip socket. The cast is usually applied in the operating theatre under a general anaesthetic once your child's hips have been checked by the surgeon.

Care of your child in hospital

While your child is in hospital the nurse will provide you with information and answer your questions on:

- care of the cast
- hygiene and other self care issues
- positioning your child for comfort, sleeping, pain relief and pressure area care

Your child will also be seen by the Occupational Therapist (OT) who will provide information and equipment to assist you at home. This will include information on:

- safe transportation of your child in a car, including assessing your child in their car seat if they use one. If your child does not fit in their existing car seat, it is the parents/carers responsibility to find an alternative car seat. The OT can give you some suggestions if you are unable to find a suitable car seat prior to discharge. Alternative transport options will be discussed with you as required.
- mobility, lifting and transferring your child. The OT will assess your child in their buggy if they use one, or assess the need for a wheelchair
- positioning for play, eating, toileting and sleeping
- supports if you are planning for your child to return to preschool or school

How should I care for my child?

- Changing your child's position every 4 hours during waking hours will help prevent pressure sores from developing as well as helping with circulation and lung functioning
- The bar between your child's casted legs **is not** to be used for lifting your child
- It is important to always have your child supported on pillows or other soft surfaces
- Place a pillow under the thigh/hip line of the cast when positioning your child on their stomach
- While your child is on their stomach, it is a good time to check the skin under the edges of the casts for any signs of redness. If you have any concerns please contact the outpatient clinic nurses
- The cast should be kept clean and dry. The cast is not waterproof, so you will need to be careful when washing your child
- You will need to sponge wash your child while in the cast
- Make sure your child does not put anything down the cast or use anything to scratch under the cast, such as rulers or pens as these may cause a scratch which can easily become infected
- Loose fitting clothes are most suitable i.e. skirts, long tops. Some parents/carers have adapted clothes by cutting the side seams and applying ties or Velcro down the seams
- Ensuring your child is taking adequate fluids and has a high fibre diet to decrease the risk of constipation occurring due to immobility.
- Crawling in the cast is not a problem. The cast will hold the hips in place

Follow Up

When you leave the hospital you will get an appointment to attend the outpatient clinic. Your child may need an x-ray at this time. When it is time to remove the cast, it is normally taken off in the outpatient clinic. The appearance and noise of the plaster saw can be frightening for children, but the process is a fast and painless process.

If you have any concerns or questions about your child's treatment, please phone:

Paediatric Orthopaedic Outpatient Clinic Nurses
(09) 307 4949 Extension 6568. Clinic Hours: Monday – Friday 8.30am – 5.00pm
Starship Ward 24A (09) 307 4909 (24 Hours)

Authors:

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