

# Serial Casting

## Paediatric Physiotherapy

### Families Directorate Information Leaflet



### Options available

If you'd like a large print, audio, Braille or a translated version of this leaflet then please call:

**01253 955588**

Our Four Values:

People Centred

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## **What is Serial Casting?**

- Serial casts are used to give a long stretch to muscles and tendons that have become tight or shortened.
- The aim is to hold the ankle and foot in the right position for a long time using plaster of paris and / or other casting bandage.
- Casts will be changed at a minimum once a week to check the skin and to gain an improved position of the foot.
- For children who are walking, the casts help to re-educate the walking pattern.
- Your Physiotherapist will discuss treatment with you and your child's Consultant before any casting is started.

## **Will the treatment hurt my child?**

- Due to the change of position and the stretch of the muscle, your child may experience some initial discomfort.
- If this lasts or is accompanied by any other problems, you must contact your Physiotherapist or one of the other contact numbers given overleaf.

## **How long will my child be in cast?**

The amount of time spent in a cast and the frequency of cast changes will be decided by your child's Physiotherapist taking into account:

- your child's tolerance of the casts.
- the amount of increased movement needed.
- the ease with which shortening responds to treatment.

Casts may be used for up to 4-6 weeks, but often less time is required. This depends on response to casting and also time for splint/s to be made (if required).

Each time the cast is removed, the foot position will be re-assessed and the next step of treatment planned.

## **What happens next?**

- A splint may be made during the casting period, to be worn after the last cast is removed. This will depend on your child's specific needs.
- There is a small possibility that your child may need serial casting again in the future. However this will be discussed with you and the reasons why at that time.

## **What are the risks of Serial Casting?**

- Allergy - rash, itching etc
- Circulatory problems - colour change
- Pressure sores.
- Skin breakdown.
- Slipping and falling if cast shoes not worn.
- Some discomfort after casts removed which may affect your child's walking at first.

There may also be some problems with putting the cast on and taking it off. These should be explained to you by the team at Victoria Hospital, Blackpool.

## **Will the casts stop my child doing any activities?**

- Children can usually continue with their daily routine of activities, except for activities which will get the plaster wet e.g. bathing or swimming. However if you are unsure about a particular activity please discuss it with your Physiotherapist
- You will be told how long to wait after the cast has been put on before your child can walk or stand on it.
- You may also be given extra activities to exercise the other muscle groups, which aren't in the casts.

## **DO's**

**It is important that you check the casts frequently during the first day and then at least once a day for as long as the casts are on.**

You will be shown what to look for, and these will include:

- Circulation in the toes i.e. changes in skin colour or temperature, swelling or the cast becoming tight.
- Sharp edges at the top and bottom of the cast.
- Rashes.
- Abrasions or rubbing.
- Signs of cast slipping off.

## **DON'Ts**

Please **do not**:

- Allow the skin or cast to become wet.
- Insert anything into the cast to scratch.
- Allow anything to fall into the cast, e.g. sand.
- Allow your child to walk without wearing the cast shoes.

## Useful contact details

- Blenheim House Child Development Centre  
: 01253 951615
- St Annes Primary Care Centre: 01253  
957870
- Blackpool teaching Hospitals: 01253 953937

A letter will be supplied to bring to A&E if you have to attend out of hours service.

Hospital Switchboard: **01253 300000**

## Patient Relations Department

The Patient Relations Department offer impartial advice and deal with any concerns or complaints the Trust receives. You can contact them via:

Tel: **01253 955589**

email: **patient.relations@bfwh.nhs.uk**

You can also write to us at:

**Patient Relations Department, Blackpool Victoria Hospital, Whinney Heys Road, Blackpool FY3 8NR**

Further information is available on our website:

**www.bfwh.nhs.uk**

## References

This leaflet is evidence based wherever the appropriate evidence is available, and represents an accumulation of expert opinion and professional interpretation.

Details of the references used in writing this leaflet are available on request from:

**Policy Co-ordinator/Archivist 01253 953397**