

Instructions for children wearing a plaster cast

- Keep the limb elevated especially during the first few days
- Exercise other joints regularly
- Do not allow your cast to get wet
- Do not press on your cast for 48 hours if it is a plaster of paris cast, or for 1 hour if wearing a fiberglass cast or softcast
- Do not poke anything down your cast as this could damage the skin

If you notice any of the following elevate the limb for 30 minutes:

- Swelling of the fingers
- Paleness or blueness of the fingers
- Pins & needles or numbness in the fingers
- No pain relief after taking pain relieving medicine

If any of the following occur please return to the department:

- Your cast becomes soft/cracks /breaks
- Your cast becomes loose or falls off
- Your cast becomes uncomfortable
- Objects get stuck inside

Instructions for removal of softcast

- Peel the softcast at the edge where the cast has been completed
- Ensure to lift the whole edge. If you lift from one corner only it may break into threads and this makes removal difficult

- Unravel the softcast ensuring to support the limb as you do
- When the softcast has been removed the stockinette underneath may be removed using scissors
- Do not** initially try to remove the softcast with scissors. This will make unravelling the cast almost impossible
- Soft cast is **never** removed with a plaster saw



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Buckle Fracture Fact Sheet



**THE ADELAIDE & MEATH
HOSPITAL, DUBLIN**
INCORPORATING THE NATIONAL CHILDRENS
HOSPITAL

Description

Bones are softer in children than adults and often buckle or bend rather than completely break. Buckle fractures are incomplete fractures that compress (buckle) the bone. They are quickest fractures to heal.



Symptoms

The following are the most common symptoms of a forearm fracture:

- Pain or tenderness
- Swelling
- Obvious deformity
- Difficulty using or moving the injured area
- Warmth, bruising, or redness
- Inability to rotate or turn the forearm

Treatment Options

- A child's bones heal much more quickly than an adult's bones
- A backslab plaster cast is sometimes used initially & then a full cast will be applied when swelling has settled

Softcast versus fibreglass cast

Fibreglass & plaster of paris are the traditional materials that a cast may be made of. Both are equally useful, cannot get wet and full casts need to be removed with a plaster saw.

Softcast is a newer material useful for buckle fractures. It allows a little more movement and may be removed by unwrapping it rather than cutting it.

Softcast provides appropriate levels of support in the treatment of fractures and soft tissue injuries. It is used mainly for buckle fractures. An advantage is that an electric saw is not required to remove the cast.

Fiberglass provides the patient with as much mobility as is appropriate, helping to prevent joint stiffness and assisting in recovery. Fiberglass material remains semi-rigid and flexible for resilient support. It is required for greenstick fractures and sometimes for older children with buckle fractures.

How do the bones heal?

Bone cells initially create a type of scar tissue called callus that connects the ends of the broken bones. This is gradually replaced by normal bone and the bone will eventually look and function normally. During the healing phase the bone is not very strong and may re-break or bend if your child is not careful.

Pain Management

Most children do not suffer much pain once the cast has been applied. The following will help to treat any pain:

- Paracetamol (see bottle for instructions)
- Ibuprofen (see bottle for instructions)
- Sling / elevation

Diet

Vitamin C and calcium are needed for bone healing but only in the amounts found in a normal healthy diet.

Physiotherapy

Children who sustain buckle fractures do not require physiotherapy. Stiff joints are usually only temporary.

Activity

Sports activities should be avoided until the bone has sufficiently healed. You will be given advise on the number of weeks necessary.

Preventive Action

- Wear a helmet when cycling
- Use wrist supports, elbow and knee pads for skateboarding, skating or roller blading
- When playing football, soccer or rugby correct equipment should always be worn.