

Wrist exercises after a plaster cast is removed

Information for patients

Caring for your skin

- Following removal of your cast your skin may be dry. It may help if you place your arm in warm water for five to 10 minutes.
- Once removed from the water gently pat the dry skin. Do not be tempted to rub too vigorously as you may damage the skin.
- When your arm is dry apply moisturising cream to the affected area.
- Repeat this process daily until your skin returns to normal.

Pain and swelling

- You may experience some swelling in your wrist and hand after the cast has been removed.
- Raising your hand above your heart can help reduce the swelling.
- Pain and swelling can be eased by applying ice to the area for up to 20 minutes. Make sure you wrap the ice in a towel and do not place it directly on your skin.
- Experiencing pain for several weeks after removal of the plaster is common, and it is important that you keep your pain under control. Taking regular painkillers may be required, please speak to your doctor, GP or pharmacist about which painkillers are right for you.

It is important that you start moving your wrist as soon as possible when you come out of your cast. By exercising and regaining normal movement the feeling of stiffness and pain should gradually reduce.

The wrist and hand exercises will be most effective if practiced regularly. You should try to practice the following exercises three to four times throughout the day.

Wrist exercises

Wrist flexion



1. Rest your arm on a table
2. Let your hand hang over the edge of the table
3. Try to bend your wrist
4. Hold for 10 seconds. Repeat 10 times

Wrist extension



1. Keeping your forearm on a flat surface, lift your wrist as much as you can
2. Hold for 10 seconds. Repeat 10 times

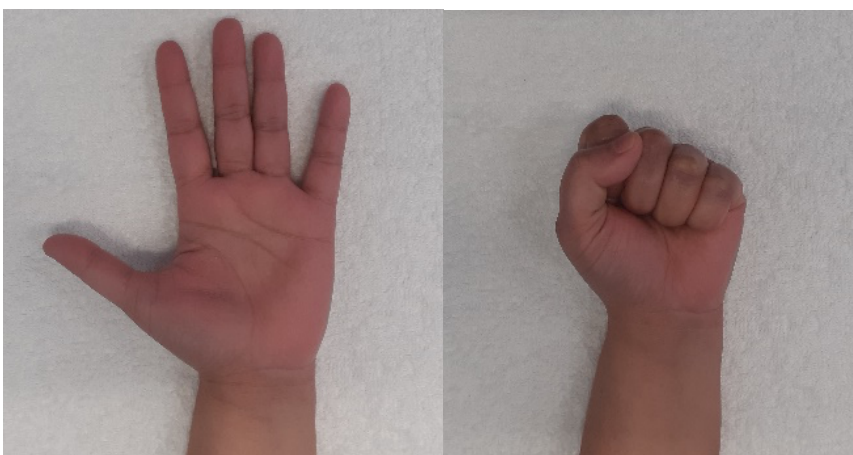
Forearm pronation/supination



1. Sit or stand with your elbow by your side bent to 90 degrees.
2. Keeping your elbow by your side:
3. Turn your hand so that your palm faces down, then turn your hand so that your palm faces up.
4. Repeat 10 times

Hand exercises

Finger movements



1. Fan all fingers apart as much as you can
2. Clench your fist
3. Repeat 10 times

Thumb movement



1. Touch your thumb to the top of each finger in turn.
2. Repeat 10 times
3. (Progress to touching your thumb to the base of each finger)

More information

For more information about the fracture clinic at the Royal Free London, please visit our website: www.royalfree.nhs.uk

Your feedback

If you have any feedback on this leaflet or for a list of references for it, please email: rf-tr.communications@nhs.net

Alternative formats

This leaflet is also available in large print. If you need this leaflet in another format – for example Braille, a language other than English or audio – please speak to a member of staff.

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