CARE OF YOUR CAST AND YOU!

Following application of a cast, it is advisable to keep the extremity elevated for a few days until the swelling or possibility of swelling has disappeared. Elevation means having the limb higher than the heart.

WHAT TO WATCH FOR:

1. **Excessive pain** – pain or burning in the area affected, fingers, heel or toes, is a danger sign and you should notify your doctor. Localized pain in the area of the fracture is quite normal for the first few days but should not be excessive.

2. **Swelling** – slight swelling of the hand, fingers or toes may occur for the first few days following a fracture. Elevation of the limb helps to lessen the swelling. If swelling becomes excessive, the cast may be too tight and your doctor should be notified.

3. **Circulation** – cold extremities may suggest insufficient blood supply and if it does not disappear when the limb is elevated, notify your doctor. Impaired circulation may result in bluish discolouration in the nail beds, numbness or tingling in your fingers or toes. If these symptoms persist after elevating the limb, call your doctor. Children should have painless motiron of fingers or toes.

**PRECAUTIONS:**

1. Avoid wetting.

2. Keep edges smooth to prevent skin irritation. Waterproof tape may be used over rough edges.

3. Stay away from sand, dirt and wet grass.

5. Itching is common. DO NOT USE ANY DEVICES such as knitting needles, coat hangers, to scratch under a cast.

6. Breakage, splitting or any other problems, notify your doctor.

7. If your child has had surgery on the casted area and develops a temperature, notify your doctor.

**PROCEDURES FOR CRUTCH WALKING:**

**Stairs:**1. **Remember** – crutches and bad leg always stay on the lowest level.

2. **Going up stairs** – good leg goes up first. Bad leg and crutches follow.

3. **Going down stairs** – bad leg and crutches go down first. Good leg follows.

4. You may either use both crutches and assist the bad leg, or put both crutches underneath one arm and use a railing.

**General Rules:**

1. Always dry off crutch when coming from wet surface to dry.

2. When getting into or out of a chair, always put both crutches in one hand, on the side of the bad leg.

3. Never lean on crutches! Always take the weight through your hands.