

Spica and A-Frame Cast

Home Care Instructions



What is the purpose of a Spica / A-Frame Cast?

Your child has been placed in a Spica or A-Frame cast to keep their hips and legs in the correct position and allow them to heal after injury or surgery.

KEEP THE CAST CLEAN AND DRY

A wet cast will cause skin irritation. A wet cast will soften the cast and fail to hold the hips and legs in the correct position.

What do I do if the cast gets wet?

If the cast gets wet:

- Keep the wet area open to the air, if possible.
- Use a hair dryer, on the cool setting, under the edges of the cast.
- Use a soft dry cloth to absorb wetness.
- Call the clinic (see contact information below)



A-Frame



Spica

How do I care for the Spica and A-frame cast?

BATHING

- Take sponge baths ONLY!
- Use a washcloth to clean your child with a mild soap and a small amount of water.
- DO NOT get the cast wet.
- Keep the cast clean and dry!
- Skin rashes or sores can develop under a wet or dirty cast.

SKIN CARE

- *Check the skin for redness or sores around the edges of the cast.
- If redness occurs, change the child's position to remove pressure from the area.
 - If redness continues after changing their position, a pressure sore may be developing; CALL the doctor.
 - Check for rough cast edges and cover with a waterproof tape.

	<p>Do not use powder or lotion near the cast.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not allow food to fall into the cast. • Cover the cast with clothing or a towel while feeding.
ITCHING	<p>If your child complains of itching under the cast:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DO NOT put any object into the cast, this may cause tears or sores in the skin. • Use distraction methods to take your child's mind off the cast and itching. • Use cool air setting on a hair dryer to cool the skin under the cast edges.
CIRCULATION CHECK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your child's toes should be warm and pink under the toenails. • Your child should be able to wiggle their toes. • Check your child's circulation every 4-6 hours for the first 2 days and then once a day until you go to the clinic for your follow-up appointment.
TURNING AND POSITIONING	<p>If your child is in one position for too long, sores will develop under the cast.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use pillows to turn and reposition your child every two hours during the day and at least one time during the night. • Change your child's position often (side to side, to their back and to the stomach). • When your child is lying on their back keep their heels off the bed. • When your child is lying on their stomach keep their toes off the bed. • DO NOT use the bar in the middle of the cast to carry, lift, or turn your child.
DIAPERED CHILD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a smaller sized diaper than your child normally wears. • Use a maxi pad or double diaper to absorb urine (pee). • NEVER wrap a diaper around the cast. • Tilt the upper body to keep urine

	<p>(pee) and stool (poop) in the diaper.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check diaper every two hours and change immediately when soiled (dirty). <p>How do I put the diaper on my child?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pull off diaper tabs. 2. Tuck front of diaper under the front opening of the cast. 3. Turn child onto stomach and tuck the back of the diaper under the cast. 4. Cover buttocks completely for a tight fit.
TOILET TRAINED CHILD	<p>If your child is just beginning toilet training, be safe and use a diaper.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A child who wets the bed will need a diaper while sleeping. • Before using a bedpan, tuck a plastic sheet inside the back edge of the cast and fold it over the cast to protect it from getting wet. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Keep the cast clean and dry! ○ Skin rashes or sores can develop under a wet or soiled (dirty) cast. • Tilt the upper body to keep urine and bowel movement (poop) in the bedpan. • Boys should use a urinal to urinate (pee) and a bedpan for bowel movements. • Girls should use a bedpan. Use several layers of folded toilet paper in front of the urine stream to help the urine flow downward into the bedpan and prevent splashing.
SAFETY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DO NOT let your child stand or walk on the cast unless the doctor says to do so. • Lift your child by placing one arm under the back and one under the legs. • Avoid falls by making sure the child is positioned well with pillows and

	<p>blankets.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When your child is in the wheelchair, always use the safety belt. • On the day of discharge, bring your child's car seat or booster seat to the hospital to make sure that your child can safely fit in the seat with the new cast. • Every child must be restrained in the car with a safety belt, at all times.
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When do I need to call the doctor?

- Fever greater than 101 degrees Fahrenheit
- Cracks or breaks in the cast
- A cast that is too tight or too loose
- Any reddened skin areas around the cast edges that do not improve with a position change
- Increased swelling in the feet or legs
- If the child complains of any burning sensations under any area of the cast
- Blue, cold, or numb toes
- If your child complains of "pins and needles" or "feet falling asleep"
- If the child is unable to wiggle toes
- Vomiting, stomach swelling, and/or constipation
- Worsening pain or discomfort that does not go away after pain medication
- Unexplained fussiness
- A WET CAST!
- If you have any questions or concerns that have not been answered

Who do I call if I have questions or concerns?

YOUR DOCTOR IS _____

ORTHOPEDIC CLINIC: 323-361-2142

Office Hours:

- Monday to Friday
- 8:00 a.m. to 4:40 p.m.
- Closed for lunch: 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.

If you need help after business hours, on weekends or holidays, please call the CHLA Operator at 323-361-2450 and ask to speak to the Orthopedic doctor on call.

Orthopedics

4650 Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90027 | CHLA.org

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