

## Hand therapy department

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# Instruction post-wrist fracture/sprain following the removal of a cast or plaster

Now that your fracture has healed or your wrist is stable, your cast has been removed. This leaflet tells you how to look after your skin.

If you have any further questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact your occupational therapist.

### Skin care

You will notice that your skin will look dry and flaky. This is perfectly normal after a long period in a cast. When you return home:

- Soak your hand and wrist in a bowl of warm soapy water for about five minutes and rub gently with a sponge/flannel.
- Most of the dry skin will soak off.
- Towel dry your skin. This will help remove more dry skin and then massage in some cream. Dermatological creams such as E45 are usually the best.

Repeat this process once or twice a day until your skin condition has returned to its previous condition.

### Pain and swelling

There may also be some pain, stiffness and swelling in your hand/wrist. This is also perfectly normal because your hand/wrist has been immobile in a cast for some time. When you were soaking your hand you may have noticed that the pain was less.

If your wrist feels hot and swollen, using an ice pack may be beneficial. Wrap some ice or an ice pack in a towel and place it over your wrist. Do not put ice directly onto your skin as it can burn.

It is essential that any pain or stiffness you may have does not in any way stop you from following the exercises you may be given. If you find the exercises painful or difficult, try doing them with your hand in a bowl of warm water or practise them when you are in the bath. If you still find them painful, then contact your occupational therapist for advice.

## Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your hand therapist on **020 7188 4172, Monday–Friday 8am–5pm**

## Useful sources of information

### Pharmacy Medicines Helpline

If you have any questions or concerns about your medicines, please speak to the staff caring for you or call our helpline.

**t:** 020 7188 8748 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday

### Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

To make comments or raise concerns about the Trust's services, please contact PALS. Ask a member of staff to direct you to the PALS office or:

**t:** 020 7188 8801 at St Thomas'      **t:** 020 7188 8803 at Guy's      **e:** pals@gstt.nhs.uk

### Language Support Services

If you need an interpreter or information about your care in a different language or format, please get in touch using the following contact details.

**t:** 020 7188 8815      **fax:** 020 7188 5953

### NHS 111

Offers medical help and advice from fully trained advisers supported by experienced nurses and paramedics. Available over the phone 24 hours a day.

**t:** 111

### NHS Choices

Provides online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you make choices about your health.

**w:** [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

### Become a member of your local hospitals, and help shape our future

Membership is free and it is completely up to you how much you get involved. To become a member of our Foundation Trust, you need to be 18 years of age or over, live in Lambeth, Southwark, Lewisham, Wandsworth or Westminster or have been a patient at either hospital in the last five years. To join:

**t:** 0848 143 4017      **e:** [members@gstt.nhs.uk](mailto:members@gstt.nhs.uk)      **w:** [www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk](http://www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk)

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