

Serial Casting

Information and advice for parents and carers

Paediatric Physiotherapy

What is the serial casting?

Serial casting is a treatment for toe walking which involves a plaster cast being applied to your child's foot that is changed every 1 – 2 weeks. Your child may need serial casting for 4 – 8 weeks

What are the benefits of serial casting?

Serial casting can help to stretch out your child's muscles to reduce muscle tightening/shortness and prevent them from toe walking in the future.

What are the risks of serial casting?

Your child may experience dry, itchy skin from the plaster and they may suffer with small rubs and blisters but this will be monitored by their physiotherapist.

On rare occasions if the cast slips or becomes too tight this can cause changes to the blood flow to the foot which can cause the child's toes to turn blue, go cold or go numb. If this happens you will need to remove the cast (see 'How to remove the casts' overleaf).

For more information about alternative treatments for toe walking and the risks of not getting treatment please see the leaflet 'Toe walking'.

How is the cast applied?

Two physiotherapists will apply layers of plaster to your child's foot while they are sitting, lying on their tummy, held in your arms or sat in your lap. You can stay with your child while the cast is applied.

How to care for your child while they are in a cast

Once a day check your child's toes to make sure that all 5 are visible and they are pink, warm to touch and normal size with no swelling.



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Your child will be able to walk, play and go to school whilst in their cast(s), but should not take part in PE sessions, run, jump or go swimming. They will be given a shoe which fits over the cast and this should be worn at all times when walking.

Symptoms to report

If your child has any of the symptoms below please remove the cast quickly and contact paediatric physiotherapy within the next 36 hours, or children's A&E in an emergency:

- Their toes become:
 - blue
 - cold
 - numb
 - swollen
 - blistered
- Your child complains of:
 - tingling
 - burning
 - pain



Do not otherwise interfere with the cast in anyway; do not stick anything down the plaster even if your child complains of itching.

How to remove the casts

1. Find the end of the top layer of the plaster (usually at the foot) and unwrap this layer.
2. There will now be a different coloured strip of plaster down the back of the leg. Pull this layer directly off the padding (you may need to be firm).
3. Unwrap the layer of white padding and check your child's skin for any sore areas.

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Contact details

If you have any questions or concerns about your child's toe walking you can contact:

Paediatric Physiotherapists

0121 507 4569

Monday – Friday, 8.30am – 4.30pm

Children's Accident and Emergency

0121 507 4467

Further information

For more information about our hospitals and services please see our website www.swbh.nhs.uk or follow us on Twitter @SWBHnhs.

Sources used for the information in this leaflet

- Churchill Livingstone, 'The pocket podiatry guide: Paediatrics', January 2010

If you would like to suggest any amendments or improvements to this leaflet please contact the communications department on 0121 507 5420 or email: swb-tr.swbh-gm-patient-information@nhs.net



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