

## **Advice for Diabetic patients in Plaster casts**

Diabetes is a lifelong condition that can affect the nerves and blood vessels of your limbs especially your legs and feet. This can affect the feeling in your limbs and also the blood supply to them. When these areas are covered with a plaster cast, any underlying skin changes can be masked.

When a cast is applied there is always a risk of pressure over the skin and skin breakdown. In view of this patients in plaster cast are advised to take special care of the limb where the plaster has been applied. As sensations can be altered in a diabetic patient, any change to the skin under the cast can be masked and not noted by the patient. That is why you will have to keep a close watch on the limb where the cast has been applied. This is because a lack of sensation can cause any underlying break in skin to become infected without you realising it.

### **Things you need to look out for**

- Any swelling of the fingers / toes
- Any new pain or discomfort
- Change in colour of the fingers/ toes
- Pins and needles of fingers / toes
- Inability to move fingers / toes
- If you begin to feel unwell
- If there is any offensive smell from the cast
- Staining seen on the plaster which appear to be spreading from inside the cast

**If you experience any of these then please return to the Department where the plaster cast was applied.**

## Things you should do

- Make sure you check your blood sugars regularly
- Inspect the fingers / toes including the area between the fingers / toes daily.
- Nail care is also important. It is advised that you cut your nails straight across.
- If plaster gets wet please contact the department where you were seen.
- It is important that you follow the advice in the Plaster Care advice leaflet.

You should have been given an information letter about your follow up with Trauma and Orthopaedics. If you have any concerns about when you will be seen, please contact them directly on the phone number given on the leaflet.

**If you are at all concerned about your injury please contact the relevant Emergency Department or Minor Injury Unit (MIU):**

**Royal Gwent Hospital: 01633 234056**

**Nevill Hall Hospital: 01873 732073**

**Ysbyty Ystrad Fawr (YYF) MIU: 01443 802353 or 802349**

**Ysbyty Aneurin Bevan (YAB) MIU: 01495 363318**

**Reference: Diabetic foot**

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