

# How to Wear and Take Care of Your Splint

## When To Call Your Therapist

Call your therapist if:

- your splint breaks
- you have any of these:
  - severe swelling or stiffness
  - severe pain
  - pressure areas or redness lasting 15 to 20 minutes after taking off the splint
  - tingling or numbness when the splint is on
  - circulation problems where the surface edge of the splint presses on your skin.

## What to Do, Not to Do

- If sweat irritates your skin:
  - Wear a tubular stockinette or sock.
  - Line the splint with paper towel
- If your splint has traction with rubber bands:
  - **Do not** wear them too tightly. The stretching force should be gentle for a long period of time, not forceful for a short period of time.
- If your splint is dynamic, has screws or has an outrigger:
  - **Do not** wear it while using machinery or at night. (You may if your therapist says it is OK.)
- **Do not** try to make changes to your splint. Call your therapist.

## Why You Have a Splint

- protective positioning
- promote healing
- pain control
- increase motion

## When to Wear the Splint

- during the day
- during the night
- at all times
- off and on for \_\_\_\_\_ times each day for \_\_\_\_\_ minutes.
- remove to take a shower or do skin checks
- remove to do your home exercise program \_\_\_\_\_ times each day
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

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*(over)*

## How to Clean and Care for the Splint

### ☐ thermoplastic splint

- Clean it with mild soap and water.
- Use a nail brush to remove heavily soiled areas on the plastic.
- Your splint will lose its shape if put in or near heat or hot water. **Do not** leave it on a radiator, stove or in your car in hot weather.

### ☐ plaster cylinder cast

- Keep the cast dry.
- If you need to remove it for skin care, make sure your skin is completely dry before putting the cast back on.
- Use petroleum jelly on your skin or inside the cast to help ease it in place.
- If the cast gets too tight and your fingertip turns blue, feels cold or throbs:
  - Apply an ice pack around your finger and keep your finger raised (elevated) for 20 minutes.
  - If icing does not work, soak your hand in cool water for up to 30 minutes before crushing and removing the soft cast.
  - Call your therapist for what to do.

## Whom to Call With Questions or Concerns

Therapist: \_\_\_\_\_

Number: \_\_\_\_\_