



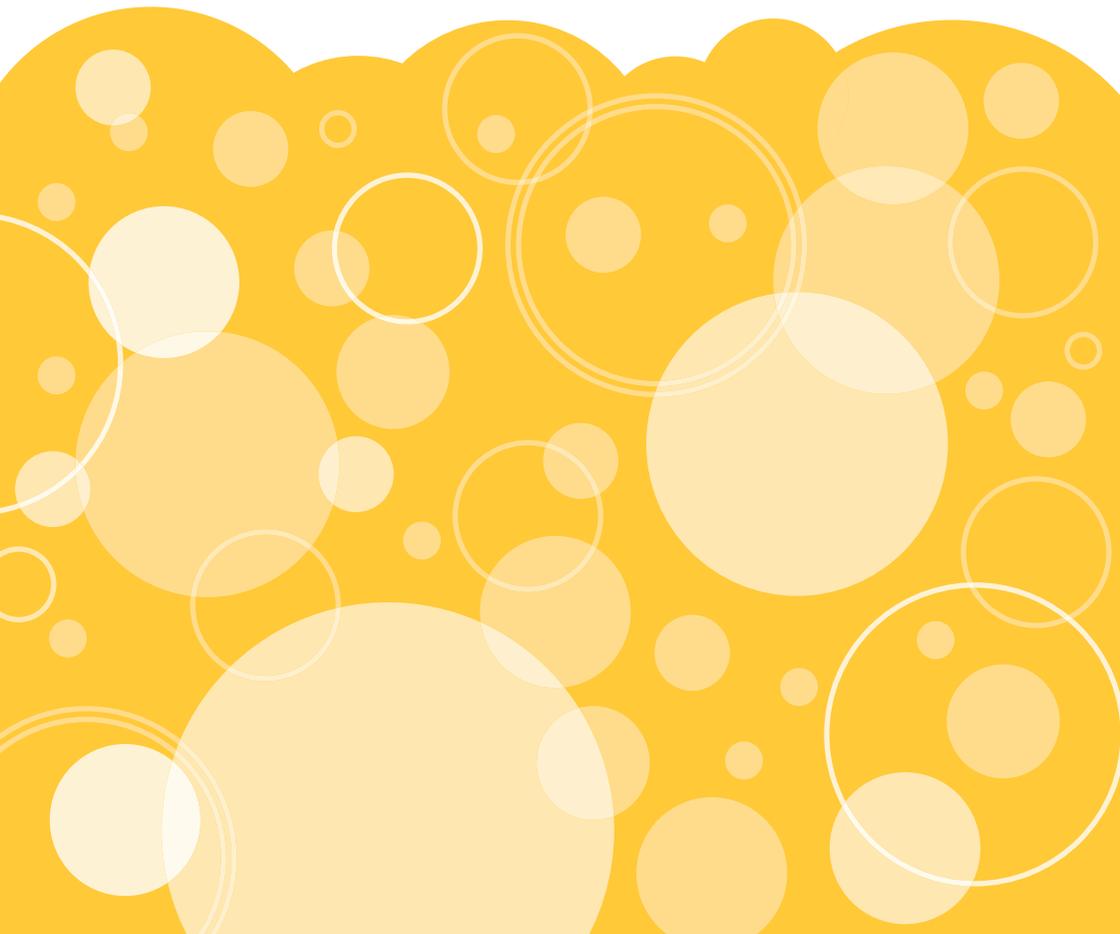
Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital



NHS Trust

Plaster Theatre

Care of a child
in a frog cast





This leaflet is intended as a guideline for caring for your child while they are in a frog cast. As a parent you will know your own child best and if you are at all worried about them you should contact the Plaster Theatre for advice.

You should encourage your child to lead as normal a life as possible whilst in the frog cast. It is important to cuddle your child even with the frog cast on. You will be shown how to turn and care for your child and this leaflet is a reminder for when you go home.

Before you go home, it is important that your child's frog cast is checked to make sure that it is comfortable. When the staff on the ward are happy that your child has recovered from the anaesthetic/operation and they are eating and drinking, they will make arrangements for you to go to the Plaster Theatre with your child to check the frog cast.



Staff in the Plaster Theatre will check that:

- Your child can bend their legs comfortably and the frog cast is not digging in or rubbing the skin behind the knees
- There is enough room at the nappy area to tuck the edges of the nappy inside to prevent soiling of the frog cast (sometimes all of the nappy can be inserted at the front and back)
- It is comfortable over the tummy area
- It is not rubbing under the ribs and not interfering with breathing
- It is strong enough

Do not poke any objects inside your child's frog cast to scratch or clean. This can cause a sore especially if something is accidentally left inside or scratches your child's skin.



Plaster sores

A plaster sore may develop inside the frog cast due to a number of reasons. It could be caused by a bony prominence, possibly a ridge inside the frog cast or a foreign body may have fallen inside, which has caused rubbing or shearing of the skin. If your child becomes unsettled and is crying without any obvious cause, always consider that it could be a problem with the frog cast.

- Lay your child over a pillow and shine a torch inside to check the inside of the cast
- Examine your child's skin for redness
- Look for any discharge or staining onto the lining

- 
- Observe for an offensive smell coming from the cast
 - Your child may feel unwell with a slight temperature
 - Older children will be able to tell you and will complain of rubbing or pain and if a sore has developed. This may feel like something wet or sticking to their skin inside the frog cast

If any of these happen, please contact the Plaster Theatre and get the frog cast checked.

Foreign bodies

Try and keep your child away from sand or small toys. If you are missing a hair slide or a small toy, check the frog cast to ensure it has not fallen inside. If a small object falls between the plaster cast and your child's skin, try to remove it. If you are unable to remove the object, you will need to contact the Plaster Theatre to have it removed as soon as possible to prevent it causing a plaster sore. If you keep your child dressed during the day there is less likelihood of foreign objects falling inside.



Eating and drinking

Your child should be able to eat and drink as before application of their frog cast. However do not give them fizzy drinks as this will bloat their stomachs and may give them wind pains due to trapped gas. Give your child a well balanced diet including fruit and vegetables to prevent constipation if your child is on solids.

Remember to give your child a rest between solids and fluids to prevent over-bloating of the stomach. Recline your child slightly after food to prevent the tummy pressing against the frog cast. If your child is vomiting after meals and there are no other signs of illness, this could indicate that the frog cast is becoming too tight and pressing on their stomach. Also a change in your child's eating pattern may indicate the frog cast is getting tight, for example only eating small amounts at dinnertime and then complaining of hunger an hour later. In that case, you need to contact the Plaster Theatre for advice.



Washing

Your child will not be able to have a bath whilst wearing the frog cast. You will need to wash your child's skin using a bowl of water and a well wrung out, fine damp cloth. Try to reach inside the frog cast to clean the skin as much as possible by wrapping the damp fine cloth around your finger. Use towels to protect your child's frog cast from getting wet during washing. A wet frog cast will eventually become soft and will not hold the position of your child's hips. It may cause the skin to become red and sore. If it does get wet, pat it dry with a towel, and allow it to dry naturally. Do not use a hairdryer as there may be plaster of paris inside the synthetic material of your child's cast, which will retain heat and possibly burn your child's skin.

When washing your child, you should take this opportunity to observe your child's skin for any red pressure areas or sores caused by the frog cast rubbing. Do not use cream or talcum powder on your child's skin inside the frog cast as this can gradually make the cast stale and smell offensive. If you need to use a barrier cream, do not let it come into contact with the soft inside of the frog cast.



Hair washing

Lie babies and smaller children on a draining board, on a changing mat, and wash their hair over the sink. You may need two adults to do this safely. You may also nurse your child on your lap and hold their head over the sink/bath and use a showerhead to wash their hair. You will need help with this and their frog cast must be protected from getting wet by using plastics and towels.

Toileting

If your child is still in nappies, they will need changing more frequently to prevent the frog cast getting wet or soiled. Tuck them in as far as possible. Sometimes it is possible to pull the nappy completely through both front and back. If your child has an accident and their frog cast gets soiled, wash it off immediately with a damp cloth while it is still wet, then expose it to the air to dry naturally.



Broken or cracked frog cast

Check that the frog cast has not become soft or cracked. If you see that it is cracked or broken in any way, please contact the Plaster Theatre to make an appointment to have the frog cast reinforced. A soft cast will not hold the position correctly.

Activities

Your child will be safest playing on the floor. Use a soft clean carpet or play mat for your child to play on. Try to avoid small toys, which may accidentally fall inside the frog cast as they will cause a sore if left inside the cast. Keep your child dressed to prevent small toys falling inside the cast. Support your child on their tummy, using a pillow, to allow them to play and use both of their hands.

Dressing

Your child will need a size larger in clothes to accommodate the frog cast comfortably.



Changing position

Always roll your child towards yourself when turning them to prevent them accidentally falling/slipping away from you. Your child's position should be changed approximately every two hours to prevent them getting pressure sores. Their legs should be supported on pillows to prevent rubbing on their back and behind the knees when lying on their back. It is safest for your child to sleep on their back at night-time. During the day they can lie over pillows on their tummy and also on their back.

Your child should be able to exercise all the joints not included in the frog cast, which will keep the circulation moving and prevent stiffness. Never lift your child by their arms. Always place one of your hands under your child's buttocks when lifting them up.



Contact details

Plaster Theatre

Tel: 020 8909 5467

Opening hours

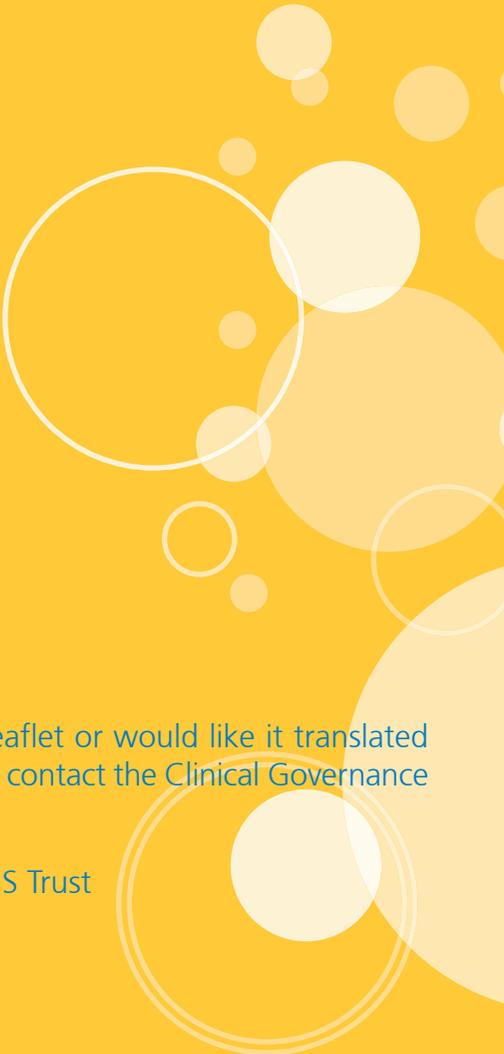
Monday to Friday, 07.45 – 17.00

Children and Adolescent Ward

Tel: 020 8909 5487

Opening hours

24 hours a day



If you have any comments about this leaflet or would like it translated into another language/large print, please contact the Clinical Governance Department on 020 8909 5439/5717.

Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital NHS Trust
Brockley Hill
Stanmore
Middlesex
HA7 4LP

www.rnoh.nhs.uk

Twitter: @RNOHnhs

14-240 © RNOH

Date of last review: November 2014
Date of next review: November 2016
Author: Plaster Department