



ORTHOPEDIC SURGERY OF THE FOOT AND ANKLE, PA

© Sarah E. Dewitt, MD

CAST INFORMATION

SHOES

We will give you a cast shoe to go over the cast and protect the bottom of the cast. It has treads on it, so it is not slippery. The cast will hold you without a shoe (on carpet for example), but it will get dirty and the bottom will wear out sooner. For most problems you can put weight on it in the cast (doctor will tell you if not). Try to pick a shoe for the good foot (non-casted side) that approximates the height of the cast (so you don't feel like one leg is higher than other).

BATHING

You cannot get the cast wet. If you get a little water on it, you can try a blow dryer with cold setting. If you get it really wet, usually the cast has to be changed. You can cover with trash bag and tape. Or, you can get a cast cover at medical supply (Blue Ridge Pharmacy by Rex or Family Medical in Cary near WakeMed Cary), typically runs \$20. Or, you can take a bath, and keep your foot out of the bathtub.

COLD AND RAIN

If your toes are cold, you can cover the end with an old sock that you cut in half. Or, Target has carried "half socks" for open back shoes, and these work also. If it is really raining, I recommend that you put a trash bag over the cast and then the cast shoe over the bag.

SKIN ISSUES

Some things are just a nuisance: can't reach your fifth toe, rubs the back of your thigh if you really bend your knee. But, if you think you are rubbing a blister, this is something that needs to be seen. The most common location of blister is front of shin. If you have an itch, just try to scratch with your finger. It is not such a good idea to stick something down in the cast since you can have difficulty retrieving it. If really problematic, it is ok to use over the counter benedryl for itching. This is fairly uncommon. Interestingly, most rashes (like psoriasis) get better while in cast.

DRIVING

If your cast is on the left foot and you drive an automatic, you can drive. If your cast is on your right foot, we do not recommend driving. You always have the option to have the pedals moved to left so that you can drive with left foot (more costly since the Toyota gas pedal issues, now runs \$500+ and may have to take a course).

TYPICAL SCHEDULE

All casts wear out at about 3 weeks. Because they start to break down, typically at the toes and heel, we replace them after 3 weeks. Also they start to smell bad. You are welcome to wash your leg at the cast change and put lotion on, etc.

WHEN THE CAST COMES OFF

There are several things you should know about after the cast comes off. Your foot does not feel good when you put it down. It is hypersensitive. You will get some pains in odd areas, and sometimes ankle swelling. Most of this will resolve at about 4 weeks after the cast is removed. Start with comfy shoe, typically a tennis shoe. There is no specific shoe that does best, whatever feels good. Remember your calf will be weak from the casting,

CAST PROBLEMS

If you need an unplanned cast change, for example, if you get it wet, and it is M-Th during regular hours, call our office. If you feel it is an emergency, or problem occurs after hours, I have been pleased with the Triangle Orthopedic Urgent Care. An ER can remove a cast, but this is a lot less convenient than an urgent care. If the facility feels comfortable putting it back on, that is ok with me. If not, I am happy to replace the cast the next day that I am in clinic. Needless to say it is much more convenient to call us and try to deal with this during regular hours. There is a copay each time the cast is changed. All of the above are typical problems that come with casting.