

# Fracture repair

## Useful guidelines for your child's recovery at home

### Activity

**Lower limbs:** Follow the instructions provided by the surgeon and the physiotherapist. Either a plaster boot will be provided and your child can walk on the leg, or they will be non-weight-bearing with crutches. When at rest, elevate the leg on one or two pillows with the heel off the end. This will ensure no added pressure is put on the heel.

**Upper limbs:** Use the blue sling provided to keep the arm elevated and supported. Adjust the velcro straps so the arm is across the body at heart level. When your child is resting, elevate the arm on one or two pillows to limit swelling.

### Hygiene

Showering and bathing is permitted. Ensure the plaster remains dry at all times – place a plastic bag over the plaster and secure with tape at the opening. Do not submerge the plaster in water.

### Plaster care

Please refer to the 'Plaster care' booklet, provided by the ward.

### Review x-ray

An x-ray may be required before the review appointment to ensure the bones have stabilised in the correct place. Your surgeon will discuss this with you further.

### Discomfort

Your child may feel some pain or discomfort in the days following surgery as they start to move around more. Paracetamol will help with this.

### Medications

- You can give your child paracetamol for one to two days if needed (ensure you follow correct dosage instructions for your child's age)
- Paracetamol can be given every four to six hours but no more than four times in a 24 hour period
- Give any other pain relief prescribed by your surgeon
- Ibuprofen can be given as directed by your surgeon (please note, this must be given with food)

Please note, some pain relief medication can cause constipation. Ensure your child drinks plenty of water and eats fresh fruit and vegetables to reduce the risk of constipation.

## Follow-up

Please contact your surgeon's rooms to organise a follow-up appointment, if you don't already have one.

## Removal of nails, screws and/or wires

(open reduction and internal fixation patients only)

The metal-ware used to secure the bone may or may not need be removed. The timing of the removal depends on the severity of the fracture. You will be guided by your surgeon with this.

## When to contact your surgeon

Please contact your surgeon if your child has:

- A persistent temperature of 38.5°C or higher
- Pain unrelieved by regular pain relief
- Persistent bleeding, ooze, redness or swelling around the wound
- Wet or damaged plaster with a bad smell coming from the cast
- Develops numbness in the affected limb
- Poor blood supply or swelling in the fingers or toes:
  - Loss of sensation
  - Cool or very hot to touch
  - Dusky or grey in colour
  - Unable to move fingers or toes

## A note before you leave the hospital

Please report to the reception desk in the foyer of the hospital before leaving to finalise any administrative paperwork.

## Questions

If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact your discharge ward on the number below.

Cabrini Malvern Paediatric Ward  
183 Wattletree Road, Malvern VIC 3144  
03 9508 1378

Cabrini Brighton Paediatric Ward  
243 New Street, Brighton VIC 3186  
03 9508 5888

