

PATIENT/ FAMILY INFORMATION SHEET – SERIAL CASTING

What is it?

Serial casting is a procedure that involves applying a series of fiberglass casts to a limb to improve the range of movement of a joint (eg. knee, elbow, ankle).

How is it Done?

The joint is stretched as far as is comfortable and the fiberglass cast is applied to maintain this stretched position. The cast allows the muscles and tissues to stretch over a prolonged period of time. The cast is removed every 3-10 days and reapplied with the joint in the new position. The entire process may take several weeks to complete.

Does it Hurt?

Serial casting may be slightly uncomfortable as we are stretching the muscles. However, it should not be painful. If you feel any discomfort, please inform the nursing staff as it may be a sign of swelling or pressure under the cast. If the discomfort continues, the cast may need to be removed and a new one applied with a slightly reduced muscle stretch.

Possible Complications?

Serial casting can produce complications. These include pressure sores, swelling and circulation problems. These are serious issues, so careful monitoring is required after a cast has been applied. The monitoring will be done by nursing and therapy staff. Please monitor your own cast as well and if you notice any changes in your arm/leg (pain, swelling, discolouration, numbness), let the nursing staff know.

Special Functional Considerations:

In order to maintain the strength and fit of the cast, it needs to remain dry and the limb should be non-weight bearing at all times.