6 Cast Care

Patient name: _____ **Admission:** _____

DATE	NRS INITIAL

I. The client/caregiver can list types of casts.

A. Plaster of Paris
B. Fiberglass
C. Plastic

II. The client/caregiver can describe the care of a newly applied cast.

A. Handle it carefully by using palms of hands instead of fingers to prevent indentations in the cast.
B. Allow air to circulate around it.
C. Turn cast every 2 hours to ensure even drying.
D. Support cast on a pillow, and place an absorbent material over the pillow to aid in drying.
E. Do not bear weight on new cast for at least 48 hours.
F. Apply ice to cast for the first 24 hours if prescribed by physician to decrease pain and swelling of tissue.
G. Expect cast to feel warm as it dries.

III. The client/caregiver can describe skin care with a cast.

A. Inspect skin regularly for irritation.
B. Petal edges of cast with adhesive tape or mole skin to decrease irritation.
C. Avoid inserting any objects into the cast. (If itchiness occurs, cool air can be blown into the cast or ice can be applied.)
D. Report any breakage of the cast to the physician.
E. Avoid getting cast wet.
F. Avoid covering the cast tightly.
G. Keep follow-up appointments.

IV. The client/caregiver can list measures to prevent possible complications.

A. Edema
   1. Exercise joints above and below the cast.
   2. Elevate extremity above heart to prevent edema.
   3. Apply ice if swelling occurs.

DATE	NRS INITIAL

B. Constipation
   1. Eat a diet high in bulk and roughage.
   2. Take stool softeners as needed.
C. Renal calculi
   1. Increase fluids to 2000 to 3000 ml per day.
D. Pressure sores and skin irritation
   1. Petal edges of cast with small strips of tape.
   2. Change positions frequently.

V. The client/caregiver can list signs and symptoms of complications to report immediately.

A. Impaired blood supply
   1. Lack of pulse
   2. Skin pale and cool
   3. Pain and swelling
   4. Numbness, tingling, and prickling
B. Nerve damage
   1. Increasing localized pain
   2. Numbness, tingling, and prickling
   3. Feelings of deep pressure
   4. Weakness or paralysis not noticed before
C. Infection
   1. Musty odor over cast
   2. Hot spot or warmth felt on cast
   3. Pain
   4. Drainage
D. Cast syndrome
   1. Prolonged nausea and vomiting
   2. Abdominal distention

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