

Section: Division of Nursing

Index: 6080.008b/7010.079b

PROTOCOL

6090.034b

Approval: _____

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Issue Date: April 8, 1991

Reviewed Date: October 8, 2008

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3 SOUTH/3-NORTH/ED

(Scope)

TITLE: CAST CARE PROTOCOL

PURPOSE: To outline the management of a patient with a cast.

- SUPPORTIVE DATA:
1. A cast, whether it be plaster or fiberglass, is a mold of a body part that is used to immobilize musculoskeletal tissues following injuries.
 2. A doctor applies a cast with the nurse preparing the equipment and the patient. The nurse assess during the procedure.

OUTCOME: The patient regains mobility and range of motion.

CONTENT:

- ASSESSMENT:
1. Assess neurovascular condition of casted limb.
 2. Assess position of cast, condition of cast, temperature of cast and tissues around cast.
 3. Assess patient's pain level.
 4. Assess cast area for unusual odor.

- EFFECTIVE CAST CARE:
5. Elevate casted limb above heart level.
 6. Instruct isometric exercises as feasible.
 7. Assist with ambulation as needed.
 8. Administer narcotics or analgesics as necessary and ordered.
 9. Notify the M.D. if patient complains of numbness or tingling or if the patient has difficulty moving his/her fingers or toes.
 10. Notify the M.D. if the patient has a fever or foul odor coming from the cast.

- PATIENT EDUCATION:
11. Explain to patient techniques to keep cast clean and dry.
 12. Instruct patient on maintaining a balanced diet.
 13. Explain good skin care after cast removal.
 14. Explain to the patient to report persistent pain, swelling or severe looseness in the cast to the M.D.

- DOCUMENTATION:
15. Record the date, time and type of cast application.
 16. Record the skin condition before the cast was applied.
 17. Document results of neurovascular checks before and after application.
 18. Document any patient teaching.

References: Wong's Clinical Manual of Pediatric Nursing, 6th Edition
Medical Surgical Nursing – Luekman & Serevcen