

Air Cast Boot

The purpose of this leaflet is to:

- Explain why you have been provided with an Air Cast Boot.
- Tell you about the risks and benefits of wearing an Air Cast Boot.
- Explain how to put the Air Cast Boot on and off.
- Show some gentle exercises you can do whilst wearing the Air Cast Boot.

If you have any further questions, please speak to a staff member caring for you.

Below your physiotherapist/surgeon will fill in the instructions for your brace:

How long do I need to wear the boot for?	
Can I take the boot off in bed/sitting?	
My weight bearing status is...	
My weight bearing status will change on...	

Why have I been provided with an Air Cast Boot?

You have been prescribed an Air Cast Boot by your orthopaedic consultant. This is usually following an injury or surgery to your ankle or foot. It allows the affected area which has been injured or operated on to heal. The Air Cast Boot will be fitted by your physiotherapist and adjusted to size for you.

It works by giving support either side and above / below your ankle joint. Sometimes you are allowed to come out of the Air Cast Boot to complete ankle exercises, this will be guided by your consultant and should not be completed unless clear guidance is given. You must wear your Air Cast Boot when mobilising until instructed otherwise. The Air Cast Boot has been fitted for your use only. Do not adjust it or fit it to anyone else. It is important to wear the Air Cast Boot as instructed to ensure adequate support for your ankle/foot and optimal comfort.

For how long do I need to wear the Air Cast Boot?

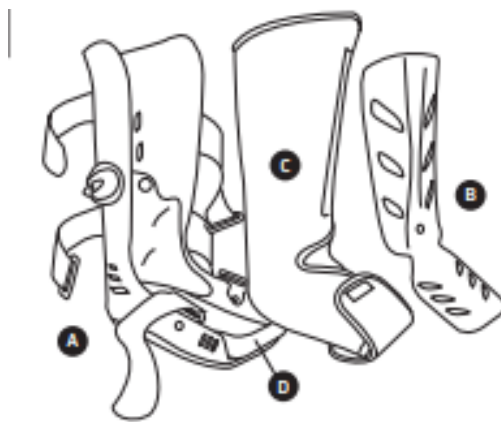
You should wear your Air Cast Boot for as long as directed by your consultant. Your Air Cast Boot should be always worn, especially whilst mobilising and even whilst sleeping (unless otherwise stated by your consultant). It is advised to wear the Air Cast Boot directly next to your skin / over a sock to get the best fit and to avoid the Air Cast Boot moving.

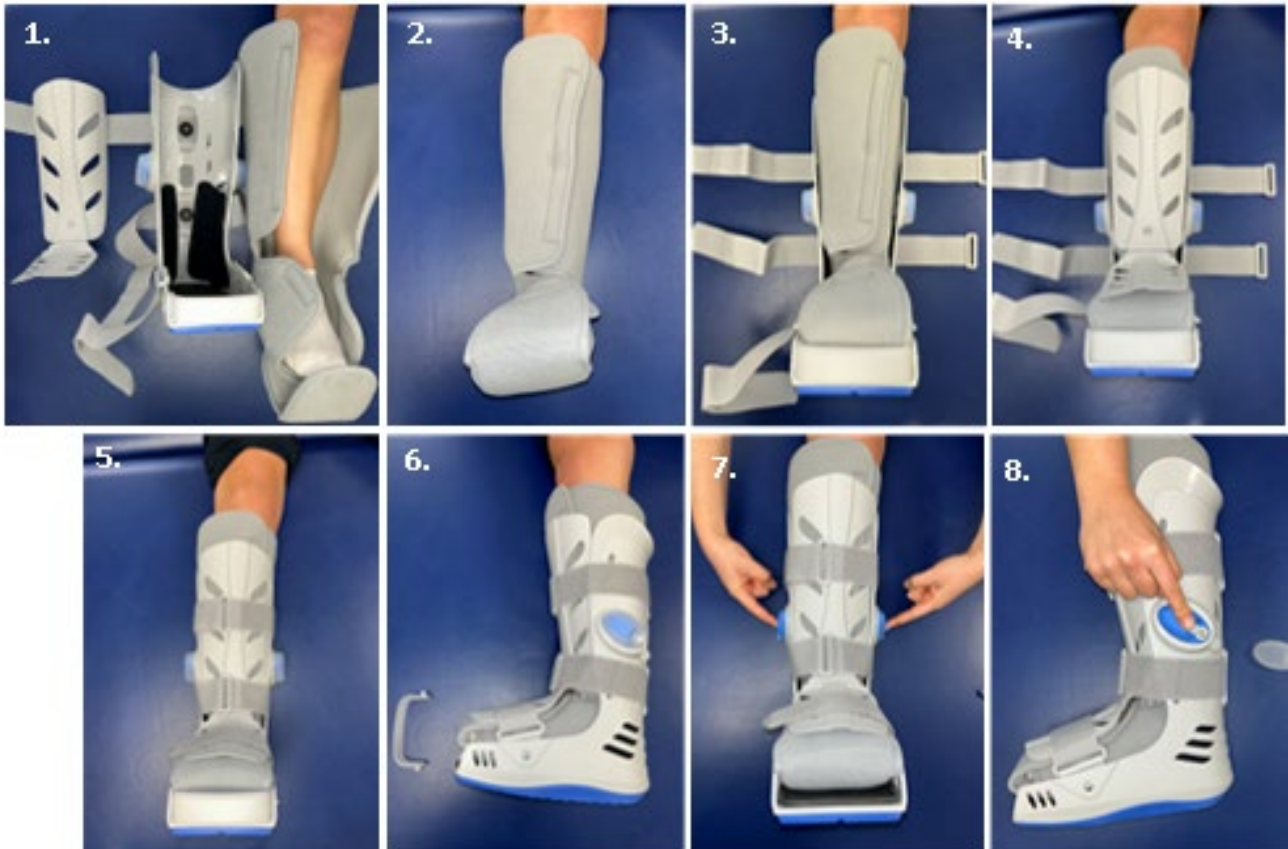
What are the risks of wearing an Air Cast Boot?

The main risk of wearing an Air Cast boot is the development of pressure areas on your skin where the Air Cast Boot sits. You will be shown by your physiotherapist where to watch out for these. Alternatively, you can monitor the areas yourself around the ankle, foot and further up your calf. There may be some red marking of the skin when you remove the Air Cast Boot, this is normal, and the marks should disappear within half an hour. If able, you can loosen the straps while sitting/lying to reduce risk of pressure areas. Remember to tighten the straps when standing after lying. It is important to check your skin regularly especially if you have altered sensation.

How do I take my Air Cast Boot on and off?

The Air Cast Boot can be fitted in a lying or long sitting position on a bed. It is possible to fit the Air Cast Boot yourself, but it can be much easier to get someone to assist you if available.





1. When you first put on the Air Cast Boot, open all the straps. Take off the hard front part (A), then remove the soft liner (B). The toe guard (D) can be adjusted or taken off (see step 7).
2. Place your foot into the soft liner, making sure your heel is all the way at the back. Then, fasten the Velcro pads over your foot and leg so they're snug but not too tight.
3. Put your foot and liner into the walker, making sure your heel is still at the back of the boot.
4. Put the hard front shell of the boot over the liner, and it will stick with Velcro.
5. Fasten the straps from your toes up, making sure they're firm but not too tight.
6. If needed, you can adjust or remove the toe guard.
7. To make the boot more comfortable, press the pumps on both sides to inflate the air cells (at the ankle). The more air, the firmer the support. You can press both pumps at the same time for even pressure.
8. When you're ready to take off the boot, open the cap and press the valve to let the air out.

When can I remove the Air Cast Boot?

The Air Cast Boot can only be removed if instructed by your consultant or physiotherapist. This can be done in lying or sitting prior to mobilising.

Washing and dressing

It is advised to wear your clothes over the top of the Air Cast Boot. You may find it best/more comfortable to wear loose fitting clothes. You will not be able to shower or bathe with the Air Cast Boot on (unless covered by a waterproof sleeve) and therefore need to wash underneath the Air Cast Boot. To do this simply undo the Air Cast Boot and use a cloth to clean your leg, then dry your skin thoroughly before replacing the Air Cast Boot.

Exercises with the Air Cast Boot

Whilst wearing the Air Cast Boot it is advised to carry out exercises to help with circulation, keeping muscles strong and your recovery. The following exercises are safe to carry out unless stated otherwise by your physiotherapist. All exercises should be done with your Air Cast Boot on.

1) Static Glutes in lying or upright sitting

Lie on your back or upright sitting with your legs outstretched. Clench your buttocks together and hold this position for five seconds. Relax and then repeat.



2) Straight leg raises.

Lie on your back/upright sitting with your affected leg straight. Turn the affected leg slightly out, tighten your thigh muscles, fully straighten the knee, and lift your leg off the bed, keeping your knee completely straight throughout the movement. Hold your leg above the bed for five seconds, then gently lower to the bed, controlling the movement.



3) Static Quads

Sitting upright on the bed with your legs out straight. Point your toes directly up to the ceiling. Tighten your thigh muscles, pushing the back of your knee down into the bed. You should be able to see your thigh muscles tensions. Hold this for three seconds, relax and repeat.



4) Knee flexion

Start in a seated position with your legs stretched out. Bend one knee and bring your foot in as close as possible towards your buttocks. Hold, and then return to the starting position.

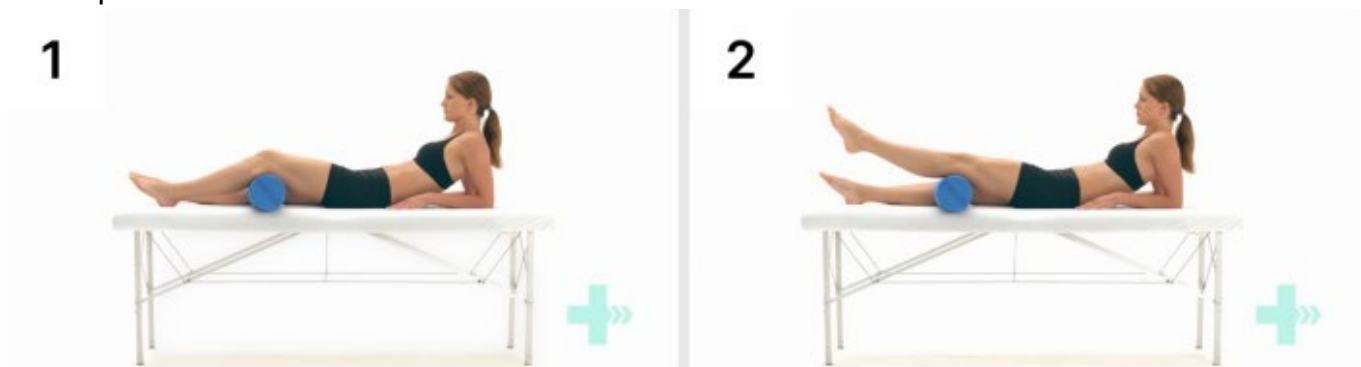


5) Inner Range Quads in upright sitting:

Lie on your back or upright sitting with a foam roller or rolled towel under your knees, allowing your leg to hang comfortably off the towel / foam roller.

Straighten your affected knee by tensing your thigh muscles. Your heel should come off the table/bed as the knee straightens.

Hold this position for five seconds, then control the movement back down to the starting position and repeat.



Below your physiotherapist will fill in the instructions for your exercises:

How many times a day?	
How many repetitions of each exercise?	

Driving

It is advised not to drive while you are required to wear the Air Cast Boot as it may restrict movements and invalidate your insurance policy. Please discuss further with a consultant and / or the DVLA for further information.

Contact us

If you have any specific concerns that you feel have not been answered and need explaining, please contact the Physiotherapy department or the Trauma and Orthopaedics department between 8:30am and 4:30pm Monday to Friday on the direct numbers below:

Tel. 020 8725 0985

For more information leaflets on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit www.stgeorges.nhs.uk

Additional services

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS can offer you advice and information when you have comments or concerns about our services or care. You can contact the PALS team on the advisory telephone line Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 2pm to 5pm.

A Walk-in service is available:

Monday, Tuesday and Thursday between 10am and 4pm

Friday between 10am and 2pm.

Please contact PALS in advance to check if there are any changes to opening times.

The Walk-in and Advisory telephone services are closed on Wednesdays.

PALS is based within the hospital in the ground floor main corridor between Grosvenor and Lanesborough Wing.

Tel: 020 8725 2453 **Email:** pals@stgeorges.nhs.uk

NHS UK

NHS UK provides online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you make decisions about your health.

Web: www.nhs.uk

NHS 111

You can call 111 when you need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency. NHS 111 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Calls are free from landlines and mobile phones.

Tel: 111

AccessAble

You can download accessibility guides for all our services by searching 'St George's Hospital' on the AccessAble website (www.accessable.co.uk). The guides are designed to ensure everyone – including those with accessibility needs – can access our hospital and community sites with confidence.



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