At home with your arm/leg in a cast

Keeping an eye on the affected limb
The affected limb will swell during the first 24 hours in the cast. The swelling usually goes down within a week. The exposed toes or fingers must remain mobile and warm.
The affected limb must not become numb or tingly. This can be prevented by keeping the limb elevated, e.g. on pillows. The limb should be elevated above heart level.
There may be extensive bruising in the affected limb. This is normal.

Pain management
The affected limb may be painful, and pain medication is required. Follow the instructions on pain management given by the doctor.

Cast care advice
Do not get your cast wet, as water that gets inside the cast will cause skin chafing. A small amount of water on the cast may be dried off with a towel or a hair dryer (cool setting).
- If there are wounds underneath the cast and they become wet, the cast must be changed to prevent the wounds from becoming infected.
- Going to the sauna is not recommended as it will result in skin chafing inside the cast.

Placing weight on the affected limb
You may only place weight on the affected limb as instructed by your doctor.

Exercising the affected limb
Move the joints that are not in the cast to speed up circulation. Flex and release the muscles inside the cast so that they do not lose their strength.

After the cast is removed
The skin will be dry and scaly after the cast is removed. Shower the skin daily and apply a fragrance-free lotion to the skin. You may move and use the limb as instructed by the doctor.

Contact your local health centre, or if agreed upon, the Surgical Outpatient Clinic
- If the cast breaks, chafes the skin or starts to give off a foul smell
- The affected limb feels prickly and numb despite being elevated and your pain medication is not sufficient.

Contact information
Prehospital and Emergency Info, Monday–Thursday 3 pm–8 am and Friday 3 pm–Monday 8 am, tel. 02 627 6868.

Surgical Outpatient Clinic Monday–Friday 8 am–2 pm, tel. 02 627 3809

Satakunta Hospital District
www.satasairaala.fi
Puhelin 02 627 71