

**The following contact numbers are available if you need any extra advice: -**

Hospital contact.....

Community contact.....

**Patient Information for the  
Gloucestershire Health Community**

**ANY QUESTIONS?**

## **Caring for your pin sites and external fixator at home**

You are being discharged home with an external fixator. This leaflet has been produced to help you care for your pin sites and fixator.

## Caring for your pin sites

- Keep your pin sites clean and dry
- Clean your pin sites with gauze and saline as taught by the ward nurses (more gauze and saline can be obtained from your GP surgery)
- Always use a new swab for each pin site
- Remove any crusts (scabs) carefully
- Leave pin sites uncovered if they are dry
- If pin sites ooze cover them with the dressing provided and seek advice
- Once pin sites are dry you may shower - remember to use a clean towel for your limb and fixator on each occasion
- Don't wash your hair in the shower at the same time
- If you don't have a shower don't immerse your limb in the bath, use a bowl or jug to pour clean water over it to wash
- Look at your pin sites daily for signs of infection such as redness, discharge, swelling, pus or increased pain
- If you feel you may have an infection seek advice at once
- Never use creams or sprays around your pin sites

## General advice

- Attend all your outpatient appointments
- Eat a good well balanced diet including dairy products such as milk to aid bone healing
- Stop smoking if possible otherwise cut down as this can delay healing
- Drink alcohol in moderation
- Keep your metalwork clean and free of dust. Use a clean cloth each time
- Don't allow your metalwork to become too hot in the sun, if the pins get hot they can burn your skin

## Anything else?

How your pins and/or external fixator will be removed will be explained in full during your outpatient appointment.

**if you have any questions about your treatment or the care of your fixator please do not hesitate to contact us. Either use the numbers on the back of this leaflet or jot down your query on the back of this leaflet and bring it with you when you come to the clinic.**