Itchy and scratchy

Alice- I recently got a cast on my leg for a broken ankle. I have to keep it on for approximately three weeks.... I had a cast on my arm a long time ago and I remember the itching it causes. Boy do I remember the itching! Is there anything I can do to remedy this before it starts?? Help....

Answer

Dear Reader,

Cast itch can certainly be a drag! The moisture trapped by the cast is likely causing the itch; but, whatever you do, don?t scratch. Scratching under the cast, either with fingers or other objects can tear the skin underneath. This skin is more delicate and thus more vulnerable to injury and infection than your non-cast-covered skin.

Since moisture is the main cause of the itch, drying it up will go a long way towards relieving the itch. If you have no cuts or skin injuries underneath the cast, you can sprinkle talcum powder or cornstarch in the cast, which will soak up the moisture. Don?t do this if you have any injuries or irritation under the skin though because it could worsen the irritation. Another option for drying out your skin is using a hair dryer on the cool setting ? this should help ?cast off? the fiery itch.

You mentioned wanting to prevent the itch before it happens. One way to do this may be to take an over-the-counter pain reliever. An itch is similar to pain in terms of its neural pathway, so regular old Aspirin or another pain reliever may help.

Here?s to happy (and itch-free) healing!

Alice!
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