

Doctors remove pope's cast, say wrist is healing well

VATICAN CITY - Doctors have removed the cast and wires from Pope Benedict XVI's right wrist and said the healing process went perfectly.

"A follow-up X-ray was performed, which demonstrated the consolidation of the fracture," Dr. Patrizio Polisca, the pope's person physician, said in a statement released by the Vatican Aug. 21.

"The recovery of its functionality, begun immediately, will be completed with an adequate program of rehabilitation," the statement said.

The X-ray and the removal of the cast were performed in the small clinic at the papal villa in Castel Gandolfo, south of Rome.

According to Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi, papal spokesman, Pope Benedict broke his wrist in a fall after tripping in the dark looking for a light switch. The accident July 17 took place in the chalet in Les Combes where the pope was vacationing in the northern Italian Alps.

After celebrating Mass and eating breakfast, the pope went to the hospital in nearby Aosta where doctors performed a brief surgical procedure to stabilize and join the ends of the dislocated broken bones with wires.