

Children's

Orthotics and Prosthetics

Cranial Remolding Orthosis

Helmet Wear and Care Guide

Congratulations on receiving your custom STARband Cranial Remolding Orthosis! This helmet was custom made to your baby, following the FDA guidelines and control. The inside of the STARband has a rounded contour that will allow your baby to sleep and move around without putting weight on the flattened areas of the head. The STARband will not interfere with any of your baby's activities, and most parents and caregivers report that their babies adapt to it very quickly. This guide is here for you to answer any questions you may have during the treatment of your baby in their helmet, and to provide you with a schedule to slowly get you and your baby used to wearing the helmet before they wear it full time. Please keep this paper handy and refer to it through the first few weeks of having your helmet, as it may answer many questions that may arise.

Break in Schedule:

Day one (today): You will leave the office today with the helmet on your baby's head. Wear it for two consecutive hours today, then remove it for the rest of the day. You do not need to clean the helmet today.

Day two (tomorrow): Wear the helmet for 2-3 hours consecutively in the morning, then again 2-3 hours consecutively in the afternoon, giving your baby at least a two hour break in between. Feel free to put your baby to sleep for a nap with the helmet on today. You do not need to clean the helmet today.

Day three: Your goal for today, is to wear the helmet all day during the day, and if you and your baby did great during the day, wear it for the night. Start the day with putting the helmet on your baby after your baby wakes up in the morning, and after breakfast and clothes changing. Wear the helmet for the entire day, and remove two hours before your baby's regular bed time. After the two hour break, if you and your baby are handling the helmet well, put the helmet back on for bed time, and wear for the night. Wearing a helmet will initially keep your baby warmer, so put your baby to bed in cooler night time clothing. Avoid hot fleece pajamas and wear cooler cotton pajamas instead. Keep the feet bare to allow excess heat to escape.

Goal Schedule: Your baby will be wearing his helmet for 22 hours a day as our goal full time schedule. Please try to be on this full-time schedule at your next appointment, which is one week from today. We found that the following goal schedule works best for most families, but feel free to alter the break time to better work with your family's schedule (especially if you work night or swing shifts).

Example Schedule: In the morning, when you get your baby up for the day, remove the helmet for up to a half hour to give your baby a small break. This is a perfect time to wipe out the helmet with a towel (do not use baby wipes) if it is sweaty, change their clothes, and feed them. Put the helmet back on, and wear it the entire day. Remove 1-1 ½ hours before their bedtime, to give them a full 1 – 1 1/2 hour break. Put the helmet back on at bedtime and wear through the night.

You will find that putting the helmet on at bedtime will become one of the bedtime rituals, and babies often immediately get sleepy and go to sleep once the helmet is put back on. Some babies have no problem sleeping in their helmet. Others take a longer time to get used to wearing the helmet at night. Please do not give up on night time wear, this is one of the most important times for your baby to wear a helmet. The cranial remolding helmets work through growth, as they grow, they fill into the shape of the helmet. Babies grow most while they are asleep, therefore, the greatest correction occurs at night when they are sleeping. Babies take 3-5 days to get used to anything new, so keep this in mind when you are teaching them how to sleep in their helmet.

Cleaning Instructions:

You will need to clean the helmet every day. To wash it, gently rinse in the sink, under a soft flow of water (avoid a strong flow, since that can force the water between the layers of foam and plastic which can cause mold). Avoid dunking it in a bath of water. Use a wash cloth with your baby shampoo, suds up the washcloth, and scrub out the entire inside and out of the helmet. Rinse the cloth, and rinse the helmet (using the rinsed cloth to make sure no residue remains). Towel dry the helmet. Take a clean dry cloth, wet it with 70% isopropyl rubbing alcohol and wipe down the entire inside of the helmet. Let it air dry. The best time to wash the helmet is at the beginning of the 1 hour break so it has time to air dry before you put it back on your baby's head. This also is a great time to give your baby a bath (if it is bath night), so that both the helmet and your baby's hair will be dry before putting it back on for bedtime. The rubbing alcohol will disinfect the helmet, reducing the unpleasant odor. Please avoid baby wipes or other disinfecting wipes inside the helmet, since wipes leave a residue. This residue will irritate your baby's skin.

Skin Care:

When you remove the helmet, it is very common to have pink and red areas. This is from the gentle pressures inside the helmet, and lets us know that the helmet is doing its job. Any red mark should go away with in one hour. If it does not go away, keep a close watch on those areas. You will often see in the first week that there is enough shifting occurring that a red spot today might be gone tomorrow. If

the skin looks like it is getting irritated, or breaks the surface, or causes a blister, contact us immediately, and we will adjust the helmet to reduce the pressure in that area. It is also common to see a slight rash in areas of skin contact. If this occurs, feel free to use a small amount of diaper cream (my favorite brand is butt paste), for a few days until it goes away. The diaper cream cools down the skin, and reduces friction. Sweating is also extremely common. It takes babies about 2 weeks for their skin to adjust to having a helmet, and then the sweating goes away, or is greatly reduced.

Commonly Asked Questions:

Is it normal that my baby is sweating so much inside the helmet?

It is extremely normal. It takes babies 2 weeks to adjust to having a helmet on their head. After two weeks the sweating is greatly reduced or stops. You can use a light dusting of baby powder to help with the sweating if you prefer.

Why does one eye look squished, and one eye winks?

In most plagiocephaly cases, the forehead is also asymmetrical. One half of the forehead is bossed, or sticks forward more than the other side. The helmet is made symmetrical, so there is more pressure over one half of the forehead, causing the “squished” eye look. This is not damaging, and not permanent. It goes away when the helmet is removed. It also gets less and less as your baby gets more and more symmetrical.

Does the helmet give my baby a headache, or cause any pain?

No. These helmets are FDA controlled. The FDA mandates and manages the fabrication of these custom helmets. This ensures that they are made correctly, and will not put too much pressure on your baby’s head to cause pain or headaches. The helmet is also made larger than your baby’s head to allow for proper growth.

Why am I seeing small bumps develop over the top of my baby’s ears?

Since we are controlling the growth of your baby’s head, we need to have contact over as much of your baby’s head as possible. Any areas that are not covered by the helmet are prone to having some fluid buildup in these areas. The most common area is just above the ears, or just above the eyebrows, or right between the crack on the side where the helmet opens. This fluid buildup is not harmful, and is not permanent. Once you are done with the helmet, the fluid will slowly go away. Babies also naturally have a bump by the tops of their ears which is a natural shape to their skull. This bump stretches out and is less noticeable as they grow into toddlers.

Do I need to cut my baby's hair?

Please consider cutting your baby's hair only if it is thick and/or course. Thick hair can negatively affect the treatment in the helmet by adding an uneven bulk inside the helmet that can cause improper pressures inside the helmet. Thick hair also will increase the heat inside the helmet.

Can I use eczema ointment or skin cream while wearing the helmet?

If your baby has eczema, please continue to use any prescription ointment as needed, especially on the cheeks. If you need to use it inside the helmet, use it sparingly. Avoid lotions or hair gels, because these will soften the skin inside the helmet, and make the skin more easily irritated or prone to damages through friction. The inside of the helmet will get moist, and thus we want to avoid a slimy environment with lotions. If you suspect a skin allergic reaction to the helmet, first rule out heat rash (which is common), then discontinue the use, and contact our office immediately. Text us photos as well so we can see the reaction that has happened. In extremely rare cases (about 1:500) there is a slight allergy to the foam liner. There is an alternate foam liner that can be used in its place, so that you can continue with the helmet therapy.

What are the exceptions for wearing the helmet?

Remove if your baby gets ill and develops a fever or an ear infection. Remove before going in a swimming pool. If your baby is having physical therapy for torticollis, remove if the therapist requests it to be removed during therapy. If your baby is having surgery, feel free to remove the helmet for surgery, but please note that it often does not interrupt surgery, so it is not always necessary to remove. Please contact our office if you have any questions about exceptions for wearing the helmet.

How long do you think my baby will be wearing the helmet?

Most babies wear the helmet for 3-6 months. Your baby will wear the helmet full time for the first 1-3 months, then we will switch to a part time schedule of just for nights and naps for the remainder of the time. We will have a better idea of the time frame for your baby at your 3-week appointment, when we do our first set of measurements and compare them to the initial measurements.

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