

# Helmet Use & Care Guide

## Use & Care

Your cranial remolding orthosis (CRO) is made of a lightweight copolymer plastic that is worn securely on your infant's head. It has been custom fabricated to redirect growth to improve the overall head shape. The helmet does not "squeeze" or "push" the infant's head into shape, but rather directs where new head growth will occur.

The window of greatest benefit from wearing a cranial remolding orthosis is between 3 and 12 months of age. The length of treatment time will vary from child to child; however, a period of 3-6 months of consistent wear can be expected. The helmet must be worn 23 hours a day as it can only redirect growth while it is worn.

## Application

- 🔗 Open the helmet as wide as possible (don't worry, you won't break it).
- 🔗 Position the helmet so that the ears are in the ear openings.
- 🔗 Position the helmet so it is right above the eyebrows and is centered around the infant's eyes.
- 🔗 Place the foam spacer in the opening and snugly secure the Velcro strap.

## Wearing Schedule

We recommend the following break-in schedule to allow time for your infant to adjust to the helmet. Do not accelerate this schedule, even if there are no skin problems. Be sure to monitor your infant's skin whenever the helmet is removed during this break-in period. Throughout the rest of treatment remove the helmet and examine the skin in the morning and evening, or more often if needed.

## Break-In Schedule

Day	Daytime Awake	Daytime Nap	Nighttime
1	1 hr	No	No
2	2 hrs	No	No
3	4 hrs	Yes	Yes
4	8 hrs	Yes	Yes
5	23 hrs	Yes	Yes

## Skin Checks

During the break-in process, examine the skin for irritation and redness when the helmet is removed. Throughout the rest of treatment remove the helmet and examine the skin in the morning and evening, or more often if needed. Chafed skin can be treated with a healing ointment such as Aquaphor®, which is best applied after a bath. If redness occurs, discern between positional and persistent redness. Positional redness should disappear within a half hour; monitor the area but don't be concerned. Persistent redness is constant and does not depend on position. Persistent redness and redness with a blanched white spot are concerning; please call to schedule a helmet adjustment. Any skin irritation or redness should fade within 30 minutes once the helmet is removed. It is common to have some remaining pinkness to the skin. If the skin is not chafed or irritated and you do not suspect your child has discomfort then it is NOT necessary to have the helmet adjusted.

## Cleaning

The helmet should be cleaned daily to lessen a "gym bag" odor. You can expect the inside of the helmet to turn to a yellow or brown color in areas of heavier contact. Please follow the steps below to clean your child's helmet:

1. During the hour out of the helmet, wipe out the inside of helmet using alcohol wipes or using

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isopropyl alcohol from a bottle on a paper towel.

2. Then scrub the inside of the helmet with hot water using a soft brush or washcloth. Some families also use a clothes steamer to further clean the inside.
3. Towel dry and air dry until completely dry inside.
4. Put back on your child's head after the skin and hair are dry.
5. If needed, repeat step 2 twice a day.
6. Shampoo your child's hair as you normally do but increase the frequency if needed due to odor.

## Follow-Up Appointments

The frequency of the follow-up visits will vary depending on the age of your infant as head growth is more rapid at a young age. Your infant will need to be seen every two, three or four weeks to closely monitor the fit. At these visits, you can expect that we will obtain and document cranial measurements as well as make any needed adjustments to accommodate or promote growth in certain areas of the helmet.

## Special Concerns

**Bath & Swimming:** Remove the helmet for water activities. Be sure to clean and dry the helmet and your infant's head before reapplying the helmet.

**Physical Therapy:** Remove the helmet to properly perform prescribed exercises.

**Excessive Sweating:** It is very common for infants to perspire a lot during the first several days of helmet use. If this becomes a problem, remove the helmet for a couple of minutes, towel dry the helmet and your infant's head and then reapply the helmet.

Dressing in cooler clothing may also help.

**Illness:** If your infant has a temperature of 100°F or higher remove the helmet until the fever subsides. You may need to wean back into a full-time wearing schedule again.

**Prescribed Medicinal Cream:** A prescribed skin product may be applied in small amounts under the helmet to address chafing, eczema and/or other diagnosed skin irritations.

We want to insure your infant's helmet is fitting and functioning properly. Please contact our office if any of the following issues arise; a helmet adjustment may be necessary. Do not wait for your next scheduled visit.

- 🔍 Any irritation or redness that does not go away within 30 minutes once the helmet is removed.
- 🔍 Irritation or redness with blanched whiteness.
- 🔍 If your infant is irritable or seems to be in pain while wearing the helmet.
- 🔍 If the helmet has not been worn for a period longer than 48 hours (after the initial break-in period).
- 🔍 If a rash occurs consult your pediatrician. Continued helmet use will worsen a heat rash. Remove the helmet until the rash clears up and do not use any ointments on the rash unless prescribed by your doctor.

## Resources:

The Use and Care video can be found at [www.orthoticcareservices.com/helmet-fitting](http://www.orthoticcareservices.com/helmet-fitting)

This Use and Care form can be found at [www.orthoticcareservices.com/forms](http://www.orthoticcareservices.com/forms)

*If you have any other questions or concerns, please contact our offices at 612.871.1480*



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Midtown Doctor's Building  
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### ST. PAUL

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### MINNETONKA

Children's Hospital & Clinics  
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### NORTHFIELD

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1381 Jefferson Rd.  
Northfield, MN 55057  
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