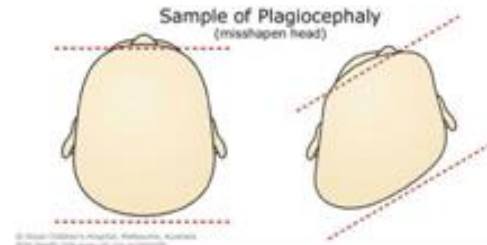


Helmet Therapy

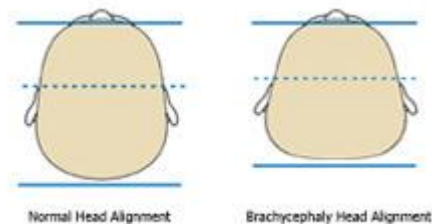
What is deformational plagiocephaly?

Deformational plagiocephaly, also known as positional plagiocephaly, means a mis-shapen or asymmetrical head shape. Plagiocephaly is a very common, very treatable condition. While it causes a flattened appearance in a baby's head or face, plagiocephaly is a cosmetic condition that doesn't affect a babies growth or development.



What is brachycephaly?

Brachycephaly refers to the condition where the head is wide and flat at the back of the skull. Brachycephaly can result from prolonged lying on the back -a positional deformity. Increased head height is also common in children with brachycephaly. Brachecephaly is a cosmetic condition that doesn't affect a babies growth or development.



Helmet therapy for plagiocephaly/brachycephaly

Helmet therapy works by redirecting growth of the head. The helmet is designed to hold the high spots and provide space for the flat spots. The RCH Orthotics department only provide helmets for children with severe plagiocephaly and only after six months of age. Wearing the helmet doesn't hurt and babies usually get used to wearing it very quickly.

Standard wearing protocol:

- During the first week the helmet will be weaned in
- In the first week the following wearing protocol is suggested:

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
2 hours on/off repeated	3 hours on/ 1 hour off repeated	4 hours on/ 1 hour off repeated	All day	Remove for 1 hour in morning Off for bath	Remove for 1 hour in morning Off for bath	23 hours Off for bath
Day time only	Day time only	Day time only	Day time only	Day and night	Day and Night	Day and Night

This wearing protocol will cause areas of redness which should disappear within an hour of removing helmet.

- After the first week of wear the helmet is required to be **worn 23 hrs daily**
- The helmet can be removed for bathing

Putting the helmet on correctly:

- There are spaces in the helmet for the ears. Make sure the ears sit comfortably in these spaces and that the helmet is not twisted
- Ensure the Velcro strap is fastened securely
- When putting the helmet on, check the helmet is sitting low enough at the back of the neck
- When you remove the helmet, check the skin to ensure there is no rubbing/blisters/skin breakdown caused by the helmet.
- Mild redness over the high spots of the head is expected and normal. This should disappear within an hour of removing the helmet
- If redness caused by the helmet is persisting for longer than an hour, you should remove the helmet and contact your orthotist for advice

Skin care:

- Dry skin/mild rashes can be treated with sorbolene or nappy rash cream. If using creams ensure there is minimal residual cream left on the head. Before putting the helmet back on, ensure the skin is clean and dry
- You may need to dress your child in lighter clothing options as the helmet may make it difficult for your child to keep cool (especially on hot days)
- Your child's head may become sweaty from the helmet. If your child sweats a lot, remove the helmet to quickly dry the child's head and the helmet

Cleaning the helmet:

- The helmet must be cleaned **daily**
- Use hypoallergenic baby wash and a face washer to clean the helmet. Rinse well and towel dry before putting the helmet back on

Reviews and follow up:

- If redness caused by the helmet is persisting for longer than an hour, you should remove the helmet and contact your orthotist for advice
- Review appointments will be booked approximately every 4-6 weeks
- 3D images may be taken during these appointments to monitor changes in head shape during helmet therapy

Points to remember:

- **The helmet should never cause broken skin.** If you notice a rub or a blister, remove the helmet and contact the Orthotics Department
- If your child is sick with a fever, remove the helmet until the fever has resolved. Once the fever has resolved recommence wearing the helmet 23 hours a day

PLEASE CONTACT YOUR ORTHOTIST IF YOU HAVE ANY QUERIES OR CONCERNS REGARDING YOUR CHILDS HELMET THERAPY.

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