



KK Women's and
Children's Hospital

SingHealth

Helmet therapy



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What is helmet therapy?

- If your baby has some flattening of the head, a custom-made helmet (cranial orthosis) may improve his/her head shape.
- The helmet gently re-shapes your baby's skull for a more symmetrical appearance.
- It is in contact with the protruding areas of the head, and leaves space for growth in the flattened areas. It does not compress the skull.

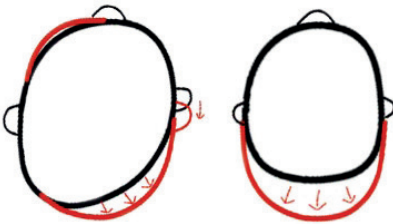


Figure 1: How the helmet redirects the growth of the skull

How long does my baby need to wear the helmet for?

- 23 hours daily, both in the daytime and when sleeping.
- 1 to 2 helmets may be used to gradually improve your baby's head shape over a few months.



Figure 2: Front and side view of a helmet

■ Why does my baby require a helmet?

Your healthcare provider will initially assess your baby for torticollis (head tilt to one side) and/or plagiocephaly (flat head). If moderate to severe flat head is present, your baby may be treated with a helmet. The optimal period to commence helmet therapy is between 4-8 months of age. Please consult your healthcare provider to determine the best treatment plan for your baby.

■ What to expect during the therapy process?

Assessment at 1st visit:

- Assessment of head shape via measurements and photos.
- Advice on the cost and process of the helmet therapy.
- Shape capture of your baby's head.
- This visit will take approximately 1 hour.

To keep your baby happy and entertained during the shape capturing process, you may want to prepare the following for the visit:

- His/her toys and comfort objects.
- Another caregiver, if possible.

Fitting after 1 to 2 weeks:

- Optimisation of helmet fit.
- Advice on how to begin getting used to the helmet.
- This visit will take approximately 1 hour.

Review after 1 to 2 weeks post-fitting

- To make any modifications to the helmet as needed.
- This visit may take 30 mins to 1 hour.

Subsequent reviews:

- Measurements and photos to track progress.
- Helmet modifications as needed during the skull remoulding process.
- These visits may take 30 mins to 1 hour.

Is it painful for my baby to wear the helmet?

- The helmet should not cause pain or sores, as it only applies light pressure to the areas of the head that is pushed out.
- Your baby should adapt to the helmet fairly quickly.



Figure 3: Your baby should adapt to sleeping with the helmet on after a few days

■ What if my baby sweats a lot and develops rashes?

Do not fret – your baby may sweat more initially, but he/she should acclimatise to the helmet over time.

Here are some tips for preventing/reducing skin issues during helmet therapy:

- Wipe sweat away and apply moisturiser and lotion to your baby's head regularly.
- Clean the helmet thoroughly with antiseptic wipes a few times a day.
- Do persevere in having your baby wear the helmet for 23 hours daily to ensure an optimal and effective treatment process.

■ My baby has just received their helmet. Why does it look loose?

- The helmet will be slightly loose at first, as there is space within the helmet for the head to grow.
- When the head shape is asymmetrical, the helmet may initially rotate to one side. You may need to adjust the helmet's position more in the first few weeks.
- As long as the helmet does not turn to cover your baby's face and ears, it is fitting well.

■ How do I know if the helmet is fitting well?

- Check your baby's skin after removing the helmet.
- Some redness on their skin is normal, due to light pressure from the helmet and moisture. Any skin redness should disappear within an hour.

A service provided by the Department of Orthotics & Podiatry Service

Useful telephone number

Central Appointments

6294-4050



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