Cervical Orthotic for Torticollis

Your child has been fitted with an orthotic to help in the treatment of their torticollis (tor-ta-CUH-liss). Torticollis is an abnormal position of the head and neck. An “orthotic” (or-THA-tic) is a device that will help support your child’s neck. The goal of this treatment is to strengthen your child’s neck muscles and improve their ability to hold their head straight.

How long should my child wear the orthotic?

- Have your child wear the orthotic for a total of 4 to 6 hours each day. You can break this time up into sessions of 2 to 3 hours each during the day.
- Start by having your child wear the orthotic for only 30 minutes at a time. Increase the time it is worn by 30 to 60 minutes each day. Do this, until your child reaches a wearing time of 4 to 6 hours a day.
- Use the orthotic only when your child is awake and supervised. It should not be worn while your child is in a car or sleeping. Your child can wear it when eating, crawling, playing and walking. It can also be used while your child is seated in a stroller or highchair.

Should my child continue therapy while being treated with the orthotic?

- Continue to have your child seen by their regular physical or occupational therapist. The orthotic does not replace your child’s regular stretches and exercises.
- Keep up with your home exercise program as instructed by your therapist. Your child can do their exercises while wearing the orthotic.
- Encourage your child to look to both sides when they are not wearing the orthotic. This will help them work on their range of motion.

What if my child’s skin gets red?

- When you take off the orthotic, look for red marks on your child’s shoulder and neck. Check how long it takes for the redness to fade after you take off the orthotic. If it takes longer than 20 minutes, leave the orthotic off for an hour.
- When you put the orthotic back on, be sure to position it and the straps carefully. If there is still redness more than 20 minutes after the orthotic is removed again, stop using the orthotic and call your child’s therapist.
- Look for signs that your child does not tolerate wearing the orthotic. Take it off if you see changes in your child’s color, breathing or level of alertness. Stop using the orthotic and call your doctor. Also call your therapist.

How do I keep the orthotic clean?

- When needed, you may wipe down the orthotic with a small amount of warm soapy water on a clean towel.
- Do not immerse the orthotic in water.
- Allow the orthotic to air dry completely before putting it back on.

To Learn More
- Physical and Occupational Therapy
  206-987-2113
- Ask your child’s healthcare provider
- seattlechildrens.org

Free Interpreter Services
- In the hospital, ask your nurse.
- From outside the hospital, call the toll-free Family Interpreting Line, 1-866-583-1527. Tell the interpreter the name or extension you need.
## What happens when the orthotic doesn't fit well anymore?

The orthotic may need to be adjusted many times while it is being worn by your child. This is normal, and occurs because of your child's movements. If the orthotic no longer fits on your child's shoulder, or does not help your child's head stay straight, then it may be time to modify the orthotic or make a new one. Call and schedule an appointment with the therapist who made the orthotic for you.

Therapist: ________________________ Phone: __________________

## How will I know to stop using the orthotic?

Your child's therapist will watch for improvements in your child's head position. Your therapist will tell you when to reduce the amount of time your child wears the orthotic or when to stop wearing it completely.

## Helpful Information

Be sure to bring your child's orthotic to all future therapy appointments, unless we tell you not to.

## Notes:

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