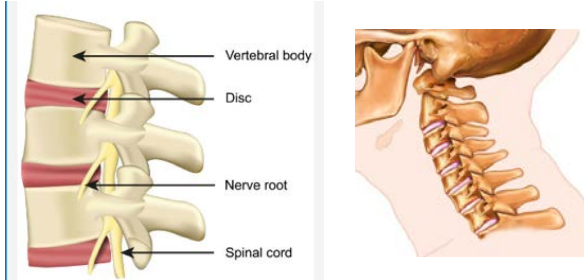


Cook Children's  
 Dept. of Neurosurgery: 682-885-2500  
 Home Health Orthotics: 682-885-6295  
 Doctor: \_\_\_\_\_

## The Neck and Spine



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The neck is made of bones of the spine called vertebrae. Muscles, tendons and ligaments attach to the vertebrae. They all work together:

- To protect the spinal cord.
- To support the head.
- To allow movement in the neck.

### Neck also contains:

<b>Major Blood Vessels</b>	Carry blood to and from the head and brain.
<b>Spinal Cord</b>	Controls all body movements and sensations.
<b>Trachea</b> wind pipe	Brings air in and out of lungs.
<b>Esophagus</b> food tube	Allows food and water to reach the stomach.

## The Halo Device

**The most important part of healing is keeping the neck as still as possible.**

- The Halo is the best device for limiting free movement of the neck and protecting the cervical spine.
- The Halo is a titanium ring that surrounds the child's head. It has a ring, pins, and support rods. It also has a vest and sheepskin.
- We place the halo in surgery and secure the titanium ring to the skull with pins.

The purpose of placing a halo on a child is to decrease the ability to move the neck by 95%.



- ### Goals of Halo Immobilization
- To support the neck and head.
  - To decrease the pain and inflammation.
  - To keep the neck straight. This is the best position for healing.
  - To keep the neck still. Moving the neck can increase the pain and slow down the healing.
  - To prevent further damage to the injured tissues.

## Caring for a child in a Halo

*Never pick child up by metal rods on front of HALO*

- **A custom fit:**  
Because it is important to keep your child's neck still and straight without any moving or tilting, we fit the vest to your child's size. We will teach you where to place the straps and how to secure them.
- **Pain management.**  
The neurosurgery or trauma team will develop a plan for taking care of your child's pain while in the hospital and at home.
- **Getting out of bed and moving around.**  
The halo may change your child's sense of balance. This will increase the risk of falls. Our team will teach your child how to safely get out of bed and move around.
- **Keep objects from falling into vest**  
This may include small toys, foods, or fluids.

- **Restricted activity**

Your child can only do activities that will *not* hurt their neck or put it at risk for more injury.

**Do not allow your child to:**

- Do not play sports or exercise.
- Do not take part in any type of athletics or PE.
- Do not play rough or do any vigorous activity.

*Your neurosurgery team will tell you when you can safely return to usual activities.*

**Daily Pin Care**

Clean around pins with ½ strength hydrogen peroxide and Q-tips.

- Use a clean Q-tip each time.
- Check skin around pins for crusting, redness, swelling, drainage, or loosening.

**Sponge Bath: only as needed**

No soaking in the tub. No showers.

**Sponge Bath for chest and back:**

1. Do not open any straps or buckles.
2. Only use a damp cloth, not wet.
3. Use warm water only. No Soap.

**Skin under sheepskin liner:**

Carefully slide your flat hand between the vest and your child’s skin. Clean and pat dry skin.

- Check skin for rashes, swelling, irritation, bruises, or tenderness.
- Do not use lotions or oils under liner.

If sheepskin gets “a little wet” you may use a blow dryer on COOL setting. If unable to dry area, change the sheepskin.

**Hair washing:**

We will teach you how to wash your child’s hair and give you a special basin to use.

**Caring for the Sheepskin**

Change sheepskin when it gets dirty or wet.

Do not open any straps or buckles

**The front and back liners are different.**

- Front Liner: Have child lay on back.
- Back liner: Have child lay face down.

**Changing Sheepskin**

**From bottom edge of the halo vest**

1. Slide clean pillowcase up between sheepskin liner and vest. This keeps Velcro from sticking back together.
2. Slide dirty sheepskin out of bottom of vest.
3. Clean and gently dry the skin as needed.
4. Slide new sheepskin up between your child and the vest. Make sure clean liner matches up with shape of the dirty liner.
5. Slide the pillowcase back out.
6. Press sheepskin liner on the vest and make sure it is firmly attached to the Velcro.

**Cleaning Sheepskin:**

- Do not put the sheepskin in the washer.
- Hand wash or dry clean only. You can use a mild detergent if needed.
- *Air dry the sheepskin.* Heat will damage the material. No dryer.

**Follow-up Appointments**

We will schedule all follow-up appointments before you go home.

**When to call your doctor**

- Pain is getting worse.
- Skin irritation under vest does not heal.
- Swelling, redness, drainage, around pins.
- Pins seem loose or site is tender to touch.
- Numbness, tingling or weakness in any part of body.

**Call Cook Children’s Home Health  
Orthotics Department 682-885-6295**

- For any questions about the HALO.
- For any concerns about the fit of the halo.
- For extra sheepskin liners

**For A Cardiac Emergency**

1. Lie child flat on a firm surface, face up.
2. Open waist buckles.
3. Place one hand firmly on front of vest just above narrow mid-section.
4. Use other hand to bend up lower half of vest to be able to reach the sternum to perform chest compressions.
5. Replace Halo vest after the emergency.

# Neck-Injury-Halo

\_\_\_\_\_  
Patient Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
MRN (Medical Record Number)

**The healthcare provider talked to me about the information in this handout.**

- I know what I need to do.
- I know why doing this is important.
- All my questions have been answered.
- I have a copy of this handout.

## Patient, Parent, or Legally Authorized Representative

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Your Relationship to the Patient

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Time a.m. / p.m.

## Healthcare Provider

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Time a.m. / p.m.

## Interpreter

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Interpreter Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Time a.m. / p.m.



Print or imprint Patient Information

MRN \_\_\_\_\_

CSN \_\_\_\_\_