

- Collar application must be secure to ensure proper fit, maintain alignment, and to prevent the chin from slipping inside. If your child can slip his/her chin inside the collar, it is clear indication that it is not snug enough.
- Common areas that are at risk of rubbing or pinching include the bottom of the ear and skin on top of the shoulders, where the two halves of the collar overlap.

### What can my child do in this collar?

It is very important that your child take care not to injure their neck. Do not allow your child to do any heavy lifting. Your child should not partake in sports of any kind until their doctor tells you it is okay for them to do so. They need to take special care not to fall. If it is slippery outside or if you have many steps, have your child take it slow and give them help if needed.

### What can we expect afterwards?

Contractures, muscle wasting and muscle weakness are some of the problems with long-term collar use. This can be overcome by muscle strengthening and stretching exercises after the removal of the collar. You can be linked in with a Physiotherapist during your hospital stay, or on subsequent Outpatients visits, who can instruct you in these.



### When should I call for help?

If your child experiences any of the following, please seek medical help:

- Sudden or severe neck and/or back pain
- Weakness, tingling or loss of feeling in their face, arms or legs
- Loss of bowel or bladder function (in a usually continent child)
- Broken skin areas/ pressure sores
- If the collar breaks or is damaged in any way.

### Useful Phone numbers/ information;

Next follow-up/OPD appointment is:

Date:                      Time:

Your GP is your first point of contact about non-urgent enquiries

St. Josephs ward (01) 409 6409

While in hospital you were under the care of..... team

In case of an Emergency, attend your nearest Emergency Department



Developed by Orthopaedic CNEF's, St. Joseph's Ward

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## Information for Parents / Carers of a child wearing a Hard Collar



Children's Health Ireland at Crumlin

Phone: 01 409 6100

## Introduction

Your child's Doctor has determined that wearing a hard collar will aid in rehabilitation by maintaining your child's neck in the proper position while healing. They will have explained the reason for having to wear a hard neck collar. This leaflet is designed to provide you with information on how to care for your child's collar and when to seek help. It is not meant to replace discussion between you and your Doctor, Nurse or Physiotherapist, but may act as a guide in caring for the collar at home. It must be used in conjunction with the Instruction Pamphlet that comes with the collar packaging.

Your Doctor/Nurse will also teach you individually how to take care of the collar and practice how to use the collar before you are discharged. Any problems or concerns you may have can be directed at the Doctor/Nurse looking after you. If, after reading this leaflet, you require further explanation please discuss this with a member of the Orthopaedic team, who has been caring for you.

**Do NOT remove your child's collar unless specifically advised by the Orthopaedic team. It is very important your child wears their collar as instructed by their doctor.**

### What is a hard collar and why does my child need it?

A hard collar is a device designed to limit movement of the neck. It is often used to manage spinal fractures but can also be used for other reasons such as supporting the neck after

surgery or a soft tissue injury i.e. Sports injuries. It will maintain the neck in the correct position while it is healing.

You will need to help your child understand that, although not being able to turn or shake his or her head "yes" or "no" may seem unusual, limiting neck motion is an important part of his or her treatment and will prevent further damage.

Your child has been fitted with the following				
Miami Jr.		Miami J	Aspen	

The position you need to change your collar, if instructed, in is:			
Lying		Sitting	

Head hold required: Yes  No

### **SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS**

**Patient name:** .....

**How long is the collar required?**

6 weeks  12 weeks  other.....

**When does the collar have to be worn?**

24 hours  Walking only  other .....

**Can the patient shower/bathe without their collar?**

Yes, in lying with a head hold  No

How many people are required for collar care: .....

Frequency of collar care per week: .....

## Collar Care

- Wearing a collar can cause increased perspiration in and around the area and moist skin is more prone to skin irritation and/or breakdown. Therefore, it is important to keep the skin beneath the collar clean and dry and to inspect it daily. Pay particular attention to the bony prominences such as the chin, collarbones (clavicles), ear lobes, and the back of the head (occiput).
- When you leave hospital, you may be given a replacement padding for your child's collar. This is in case the collar padding needs to be changed as it may have become soiled or sweaty. It is **only** changed if the Orthopaedic team has advised it.
- If advised, you may need to change the soft collar linings at least 3 times a week but sometimes every day.
- The set of soft lining pads that are taken off can be washed in warm soapy water and left to air dry. See Instruction Pamphlet for full list of Collar Cleaning instructions.
- The collar must be worn in the bath or shower, and the inner padding replaced with the dry set once you have finished, using method as taught.
- Your child must be lying flat in order to remove the collar, unless your doctor gives you permission to do this in a sitting position.

**Remember - the collar is only removed upon permission from the Orthopaedic team.**