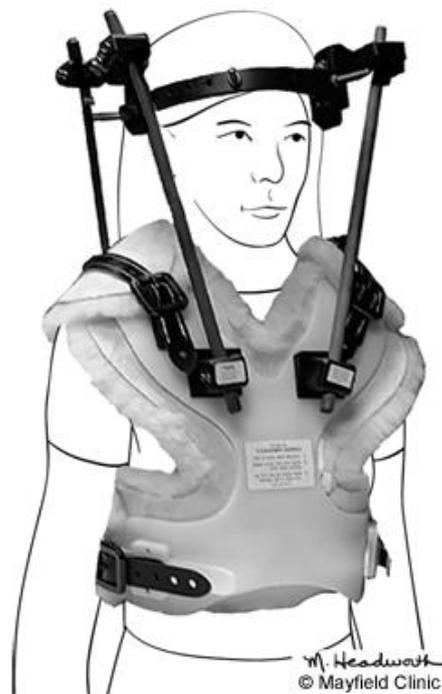
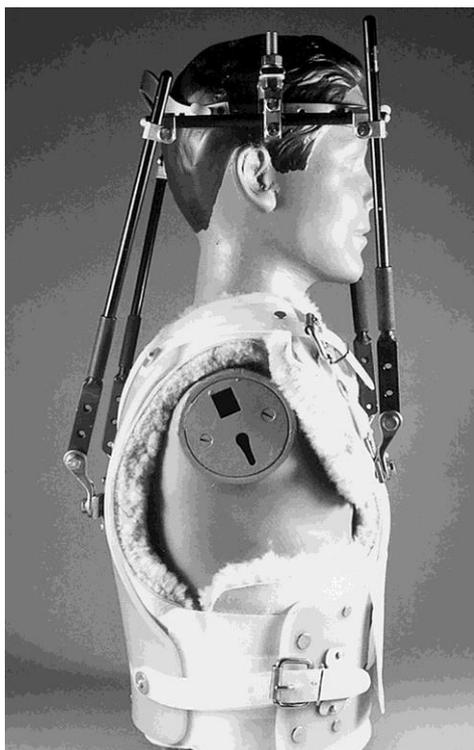


Neurosciences

Halo Jacket: Information and Advice about Your Halo Jacket

This leaflet aims to help you understand and remind you of what you can and cannot do while wearing your Halo jacket. Staff will have discussed this with you, but this written information will be a useful reminder.

The information is based on the experiences of other Halo patients, and the doctors who are specialists in this area. If there is anything that you experience while wearing your Halo jacket which may be useful to pass on to other Halo wearers, please let us know.



Patient Information

What is the purpose of the Halo Jacket?

The Halo jacket you are wearing is made to hold your neck still to enable the bones to heal well following your surgery or injury. The Halo Jacket does this by keeping the bones, (vertebrae in the c- spine) in proper alignment and immobilising them to allow healing, (union of the fracture). The c- spine (mainly the upper part of the c-spine) is a mobile segment of the spine.

The Halo Jacket must remain in place for 24 hours, 7 days a week and should never be removed. The Halo itself is made of titanium and graphite and is very strong but not heavy to wear. It may take you a few days to get used to wearing it and to find your balance, but your confidence will grow in time.

The Halo is worn for approximately three months, but this may vary according to each patient's condition and the recommendations of your consultant.

The Halo is kept in place with four pins. The fleece jacket that you wear with it for comfort, cannot be removed unless in an emergency.

Will I have check-ups?

Immediately after the Halo Jacket is fitted, a CT scan or X-ray to check alignment will be performed. If the pins require tightening, this will take place at the assessment 48 hours after the Halo Jacket has been fitted.

You will come back to an outpatient clinic on a weekly or fortnightly basis to make sure you are progressing well. You will have an X-ray or scan at various intervals to check on your progress. You will also have your securing pins checked to ensure there is no sign of infection. You can use your clinic time to ask any questions you may have.

Pin site care

As well as being checked at your clinic visit, your pins will need to be checked and cleaned by yourself or helper on a daily basis. You or your carer will be shown how to do this before you go home. If there is no one

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to do this for you, we will arrange a district nurse to visit you on a daily basis.

You must keep the pins and pin sites dry.

If you think an infection is present please contact your GP as soon as possible

Signs of Infection:-

- **Redness around the site**
- **Signs of weeping.**
- **Pain and or tenderness at the pin sites**
- **Loosening of the pins**

How soon will I be able to walk in my halo?

You should be up and mobile on the same day. Former patients have said it can take a couple of days to adjust to wearing your Halo jacket. It is not heavy, but you may feel a bit off balance to begin with. Your line of vision will be restricted; you will also be unable to look down to your feet so you need to be careful that you do not trip and fall. Just be patient with yourself through this period of adjustment.

To avoid falls:

- To reach down, bend at the knees rather than the waist.
- Wear comfortable, flat shoes.
- Avoid alcohol

Is there anything I cannot do while I am wearing the Halo Jacket?

- **You cannot drive** while you are wearing your Halo as your vision is restricted. You can however still be a passenger in a car, but be careful getting in and out making sure your Halo is not knocked.
- **Heavy lifting and strenuous exercise must be avoided.**

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Going out

You should still be able to get out and about and remain active. There are no limits so long as you feel up to it. The more you are out the better and your confidence will increase with time. Former patients still went shopping etc. when they felt comfortable and confident to do so.

Clothing

Whilst you are wearing the Halo jacket, your normal clothing for your top half will no longer fit.

- Previous patients advise that you get tops/shirts/blouses that are at least two sizes bigger than your normal size.
- Clothing with zips or buttons such as shirts/blouses are easier to put on and take off.
- Avoid wear t-shirts or other clothing that is normally put on over the head, as these will not fit over the frame.
- Wear flat, comfortable shoes or boots

Hygiene

- You need to keep your jacket liner dry, so when washing it is advised that you have a shallow bath or strip wash. Be mindful of shower rails and curtains when you are getting in and out of the bath.
- Do not shower.
- If the jacket liner does accidentally get wet, dry it with a hair dryer on a cool setting.
- To wash your hair it is advisable to use a dry shampoo so the pin sites do not get wet. This is available in most supermarkets. It will be easier to ask somebody to help you apply the dry shampoo.

Sleeping

This may take some time to get used to. Use extra pillows for support. To get out of bed, roll onto your side and drop your legs over the edge of the bed.

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General advice

Although it is necessary to learn to do as much as possible for yourself, it is more important to ask for help when you need it. One of the most important things to avoid is falling.

Also avoid receiving bumps and jars to the Halo, so very busy crowded places should be avoided.

If you experience any of the following contact the Neurosurgical Unit:

- **Sudden neck pain, temperature, photophobia (unable to stand bright lights), neck rigidity**
- **Excessive difficulty in eating**
- **Numbness or weakness in your arms or legs**
- **Pain, heat, weeping at the pin sites**
- **Fever**
- **Loosening of pin sites or the whole halo apparatus**

Pin Loosening

If you experience any unusual pain, hear a clicking noise or notice any fluid discharge at a pin site, avoid any excessive movement and contact the Neurosurgical Unit immediately.

Contact Details

Neurosurgical Unit,

Ward 43

4th Floor Central

University Hospital

Coventry

CV2 2 DX

Tel: 024 7696 5335 or 02476965329

Patient Information

Further Information:

If you have any further questions please ask the staff who are caring for you or contact Ward 43 on the telephone numbers given.

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format please contact 024 7696 8240 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

The Trust operates a smoke free policy

To give feedback on this leaflet please email feedback@uhcw.nhs.uk

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