

Children and Young People's Occupational Therapy Service (CYPOT)

Sling Application

Please be aware that these are general guidance points, your Occupational Therapist may have shown you techniques and tips specific to your child. The easiest way to apply a sling may be in the lie flat position.

Position

- If possible raise the bed to waist height to minimise bending and reaching.
- With your child lying on their back, supporting them at the hip and shoulder, roll them onto their side.
- If your child is unable to maintain a side lying position, you may use a pillow or wedge to support their position.
- Always ensure your child's mouth and nose are visible and uncovered.

Sling

- Check that the sling's label has not faded, there are no frays holes or tears on the sling and that all loops are in tact.
- Fold the sling in half with the label on the outside, labels should always be visible and should not touch the skin. The sling should cover from the buttocks to the head (dependent on sling type).
- Tuck the folded seam of the sling under your child, you may roll the folded half if this is easier (it may depend on the size of your child)
- Carefully roll your child onto their back, the sling should naturally lay flat, but if needed, gently manoeuvre elements into place - be careful not to tug or use harsh movements that may be abrasive to the skin.
- Ensure where possible that any kinks or bunched up fabric is minimised and that the slings surface is smoothed out as much as possible.

Lifting and Lowering

- Once your child is central in the sling and you have completed equipment checks of the hoist, you can proceed to attaching the loops.
- Always ensure the loops are untangled, clear for you to see and secure when attached.
- Prior to completing a full lift, always complete a 'test tug' - raise the hoists boom until the the loops of the sling begin to become taught, at this point pause lifting to check that everything is secure and that your child is comfortable and that there is no pinching of the skin or tangles in the sling.
- If the position is incorrect or the child is in discomfort, never try to adjust the sling whilst lifting. You must lower and begin again.
- When attaching the loops, your OT may have discussed your options specific to your child, rule of thumb is "short shoulders and longer legs" however, this is always dependent on comfort and desired position.

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