## How do I clean it?

Beagle provide cleaning instructions. The nursing staff or therapists should provide their information sheet at the time the helmet is provided.

## What should I look out for?

If you experience discomfort or any marking with the helmet, inform the nursing staff or therapist involved in your care immediately. Continue to use the helmet to manage your risks until staff can assess the issue and advise on how to reduce the discomfort or marking. This may require helmet adjustments, which will be discussed with you.

## What happens when I am discharged from hospital?

You will have information regarding how to put on and take off your helmet, and when to wear and clean it. This will also be discussed with family and carers, if appropriate.

## Any problems?

If any difficulties arise with your helmet, immediately contact the therapists involved in your care or your GP.

If you would like this leaflet in large print, braille, audio version or in another language, please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 01872 252793

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Royal Cornwall Hospitals NHS
NHS Trust

# Following your craniectomy

## Wearing a protective helmet







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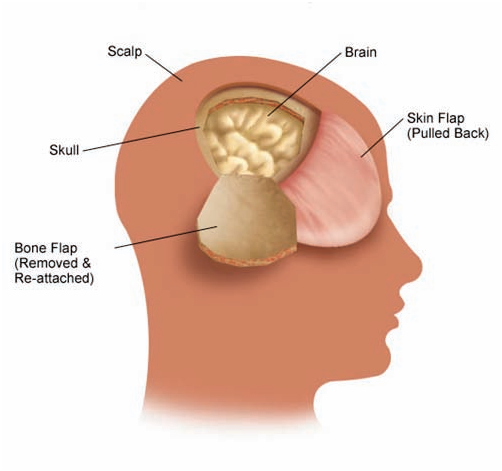
## Who is this leaflet for?

This leaflet is for patients who have had an operation called a craniectomy. It provides you with information regarding the protective helmet you have been provided with following the procecure.

## What is a craniectomy?

This is a neurosurgical procedure that involves removing a portion of your skull in order to relieve pressure on your brain. This procedure is done in cases where a patient has experienced a very severe brain injury that involves significant amounts of bleeding around the brain or a high level of swelling of the brain. Neurosurgeons (specialist brain surgeons) can remove a portion of the skull, any underlying clot that is compressing the brain, and relieve pressure. The brain typically experiences a great deal of swelling after a severe injury. Removing the bone frees the brain to swell upward rather than downward where it can cause further damage.




## Why do I need a protective helmet?

While the skull bone is removed there is no protection for the underlying brain and potential risk of further brain damage if your head is knocked. Patients can experience confusion, loss of function and reduced mobility, which can increase risks. You will be assessed for your risk on admission by an experienced staff member.

## How is my helmet provided?

According to your risk assessment and care plan, the team will:

- measure your head circumference
- provide an appropriate helmet
- discuss with you the purpose of the helmet and when you should wear it.

The team may also discuss other recommendations to maintain your safety. If you verbally consent this will also be discussed with appropriate family and carers. If you lack capacity to consent to recommendations of the team, they will act in your best interest following a capacity assessment and this will be discussed with appropriate next of kin. Capacity will be regularly reviewed.

## What type of helmet is it?

The Helmet is a Beagle A flex helmet. The size will depend on your head measurement. The helmet has adjustable sides to allow adjustments for head swelling, and can be adjusted by our Appliance Department if there are any signs of discomfort or marking, as recommended by your therapist.




## When do I wear it?

The medical, nursing and therapy team will advise on when to wear the helmet and will regularly review this according to your risk assessment. This will all be written in your care plan.

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