HALO BRACE MANAGEMENT

Halo
The halo you are wearing is an orthosis that provides external support. It will support and protect your neck while it is healing.

An orthotist will monitor the comfort and fitting of the halo. Do not attempt to loosen or adjust your halo by yourself. Any adjustments must be made by your orthotist.

Activity
Initially you will feel awkward, top heavy and may bump into furniture, etc. However this will decrease as you become accustomed to your new way of moving. It is important to carry out as much of your daily activities within the constraints of wearing the halo.

Avoid all activities involving heavy lifting, jumping or running.

Sleep
When your halo is first put on, you will not be accustomed to having your head suspended. Sleeping with the head of your bed or mattress elevated may help you become more comfortable. The most convenient method of sleeping is on your back or side. You can even sleep on your stomach by placing a pillow or blanket under your chest and another at the front of your halo ring so your nose is not pressed into the mattress.

Getting up
Get up by rolling onto your side towards the edge of the bed. Drop your legs off the edge of the bed. Push up to a sitting position with your elbow and hand. You will be taught this technique during your hospital stay.

Bathing
Bathing while wearing a halo can be awkward until you establish a routine. To wash your body under the vest, use a wash cloth moistened with pure soap. Gently move the towel back and forth in a drying motion beneath both front and back portions of the vest by pulling the ends of the towel. Perfumes, deodorants, lotions or powders may irritate your skin.

Showering can be attempted only below waist level, as it is important to keep the vest liner dry. The best method to shower is to use a hand held shower hose and bathe below waist level.
Pin Care

Pin care should be carried out at least once a day with assistance. Areas around your pins should be cleaned with a long cotton tip bud, and saline solution. Your nurse can instruct you on pin care.

Shampooing your hair

You can shampoo your hair if the halo is protected with plastic. You can sit or kneel over a basin or bathtub and bend forward at the waist until your head is lower than your shoulders if possible. Ideally it is easiest to use a hand held shower hose to shampoo your hair.

Dressing

Adapting clothes that fit under and around your halo and the bars can be a challenge. Consider using shirts or blouses that are one to two sizes larger. Jacket/ cardigans with zippers or buttons are also easy to put on.

Footwear

Wear low-heeled shoes with traction soles to prevent slipping especially when you are outside. Avoid wearing high-heeled shoes as they change your balance and increase your chances of falling.

Travel

Traveling in a car does not pose a problem especially if the car is large. To get into the car, back into the seat with your body bent forward. Sit down and swing your legs into the car. To get out, just reverse the process.

- Driving is not allowed until your halo is removed and your physician allows you to return to driving.
- Traveling by airplane is allowed. The airlines will likely request that you pre-board.
- Traveling by bus or train is also permitted. You should try and time your travel during non-busy times to ensure that you get a seat.

Sexual Activity

Sexual activity can be carried out during the time you have the halo but it will probably need to be modified. The halo is not designed for close contact. You will want to try different positions in order to engage in sex with some degree of comfort. Lying on your side or back is probably most comfortable.