

# How is craniosynostosis treated?

## Treatment Options

Once a diagnosis of craniosynostosis has been established, treatment options will be discussed with you by your craniofacial specialist team.

There are two options when dealing with the diagnosis of craniosynostosis:

- Observation
- Surgical intervention

## How to choose between observation and surgery

If the craniosynostosis is very mild, the child is on track with their development and they have no signs of increased intracranial pressure (ICP), then it is reasonable to observe the child for these red flags. This would be in addition to maintaining regularly scheduled appointments with the craniofacial specialist team for evaluation.

If the child is behind in their developmental skills and/or showing signs of increased ICP, or there is a significant cosmetic defect, then the recommendation would be to proceed with surgery.

## Surgery

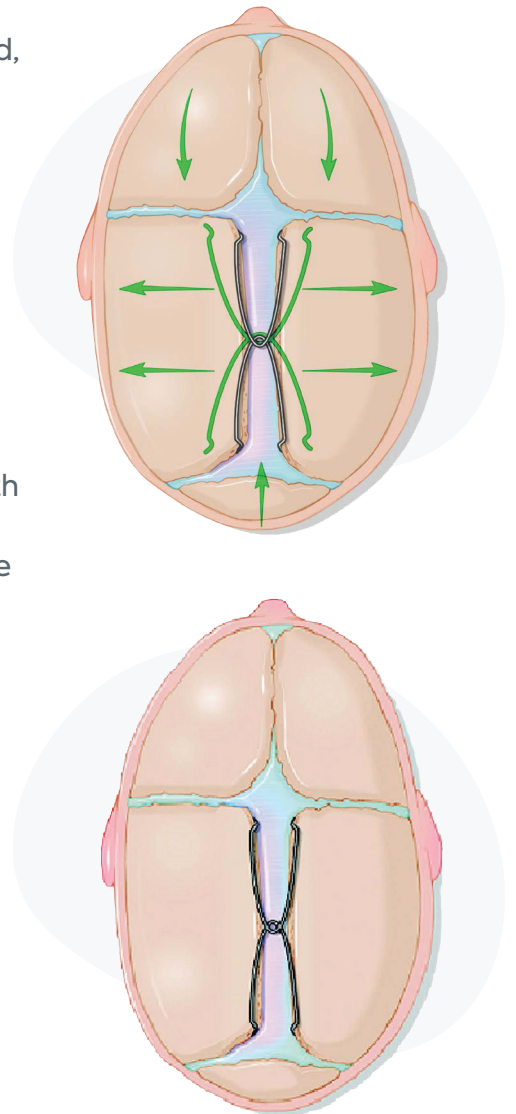
The type of surgery recommended will depend on the child's age.

### Children <6 months

- Endoscopic, minimally invasive procedure
- With this type of surgery, the child will be required to wear a molding helmet for as long as one year after surgery.

### Children >6 months

- An extensive, open approach of cranial vault remodeling
- No helmet is required after surgery.



### **New approach using springs**

- Surgery is less extensive
- No helmet is required after surgery.
- Does require another minimally invasive surgery to remove the springs

### **What to expect after surgery**

Surgery for your child can be frightening, but knowing what will be going on in the operating room and what to expect afterwards can help to alleviate some fear and anxiety. After the surgery, your child will need to stay in the hospital for monitoring. They will be groggy after surgery due to the anesthesia, and an intravenous catheter (IV) will be in place to administer medications. The length of stay after surgery depends on each individual patient and the type of surgery that they had.

Familiarize yourself with wound care before leaving the hospital. It is important to know how to properly clean the wound and what type of dressing (bandage) should be applied.

Also of importance are knowing the signs and symptoms of infection:

- Redness/red streaks around the wound
- Swelling
- Drainage
- Fever

It is important to keep your follow-up visits after your surgery with your craniofacial specialists. You should contact them sooner if

- The wound becomes re-opened
- Signs or symptoms of infection are present
- Other questions/concerns