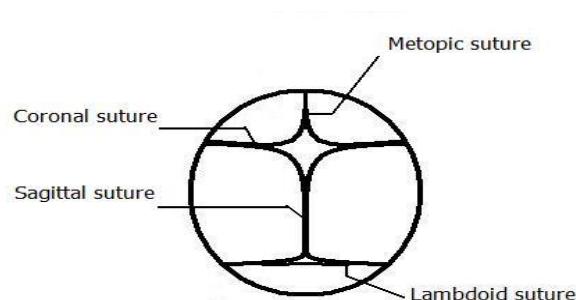


BabyGym® and Craniosynostosis

Sunette Du Preez

My baby, Arno, was born with a condition called Craniosynostosis. This is when the sutures in the baby's skull prematurely fuses and the result is that the skull and brain cannot grow normally. Arno's Sagittal suture was fused at birth. Luckily for us this was not such a foreign situation because I was born with the same condition and had my operation at 3 months. When Arno was 9 weeks old he had the operation to separate the fused sutures.



Before the operation I met with BabyGym Instructor, Liezl Blom, to chat about ways in which I could help to relieve the stress that Arno would experience during the operation and the stay in hospital. She gave me great BabyGym tips and techniques to keep him calm and stress-free. The time in hospital was very challenging as for the first few days after the operation I couldn't really pick him up at all as he was connected to various drips and the drain from his head, but luckily there were some of Liezl's pointers I could follow:

- I used my natural smell to soothe Arno. I took the t-shirt I slept in the night before and placed it next to him; I did this throughout his stay in hospital
- I massaged his arms, hands, legs, feet and especially his calves as most stress 'sits' in the calve muscle.

The massage helped to relax him tremendously. Especially the leg and foot massage, he slept very well afterwards. He is still very sensitive when I massage his arms and shoulders but with perseverance I am seeing great improvement.

The operation was a huge success and thanks to Liezl and BabyGym, I was able to help Arno deal with the trauma that he endured during this time.

My husband and I have now completed BabyGym 2: Firm Foundations with Arno and I recommend BabyGym to all new parents– it is incredible! The knowledge that you gain is so important to help give your child the best possible start in life – and it's so much fun for the parents and baby! We are incorporating the BabyGym activities into our daily lives and I can already see a major difference in Arno's development.



Arno in the Peadiatric ICU



5 days after operation



2 weeks after operation



Graduating from BabyGym 2: Firm Foundations