Dressing Techniques for Children with Right Hemiplegia

Community Paediatric Occupational Therapy Department
www.abm.wales.nhs.uk/childrensdevelopment
Introduction

This advice sheet provides practical advice for parents / guardians and schools to help children with right sided hemiplegia maximize their independence in dressing.

Things to consider before starting:

- **Loose fitting garments** with limited fasteners/buttons make dressing easier. Choose clothes like these or alternatively use Velcro fastening.
- **Practice dressing skills when you are relaxed** and have time e.g. at weekends or during holidays.
- **Practice dressing skills in context** e.g. undressing for a bath, getting dressed for bed, before and after PE lessons.
- **Make zips easier** by fastening a keyring to the zip tag.
- **Try different techniques to help** at first such as backward or forward chaining or hand-over-hand.

Keep in mind the following general principles in all dressing and undressing tasks for a child with a left hemiplegia:

The **right** side goes **in first** when getting **dressed**.

The **right** side comes **out last** when getting **undressed**.
Ensure your child is sat comfortably and is well supported before starting. For example use walls and corners for support.

![Figure 1: Use walls and corners for support](image)

**Dressing the upper body**

Remember, the right side goes in first when getting dressed!

1. Place the garment on your child’s lap. Help them to work which side is the front and which is the back by using the label as a clue.
2. Encourage your child to place their right hand in the right sleeve opening and pull the garment over their right elbow using their left hand. They may find this easier if they lean forwards and let their right arm rest between their knees.
3. Your child can then pull the garment over their head using their left hand.
4. Finally they insert their left arm into the left sleeve and pull the garment down using their left hand.
Figure 2: Dressing the upper body

Undressing the upper body
Remember, the right side comes out last when getting undressed!

1. Undo the neck of your child’s top garment to make the opening wider and encourage them to lean forward.
2. Prompt them to grasp the back of their collar with their left hand and pull the garment over their head.
3. They can then pull their left arm out of its sleeve and then remove the sleeve from the right arm.

Figure 3: Undressing the upper body
Dressing the lower body

Your child can either:
1. Lift their right leg slightly off the floor.
2. Lean forwards and, using their left hand, place the garment over their right foot.
3. Continuing to use their left hand, encourage them to work as much of the garment as possible over their right foot.
4. They then need to insert their left foot into the left leg opening and again work as much of the garment as possible over their foot.
5. They can then work the waist band over their knees before standing and leaning against a wall to pull it up over their hips using their left hand.

Alternatively they may prefer to:
1. Bring their right foot up onto their left knee. They may need to pull on a towel which is looped around their right ankle to help with this.
2. They can then place the right opening to the garment over their right foot and continue with stages 3-5 above.

Undressing the lower body

Your child can either:
1. When standing, unfasten their trouser buttons at the waistband.
2. Use their left hand to pull their trousers down on both sides as far as possible whilst supporting themselves against the surface of a wall, table, counter or grab rail.
3. Sit themselves down on a supportive chair to take their trousers down to their ankles.
4. They can then step out of their trousers with their left foot and use their left hand or foot to take the trouser leg off the right leg.

Figure 4: Support themselves on the right whilst standing to pull trousers down before sitting down to take their trousers down to their ankles.

Here are a few more ideas

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