

ABUSIVE HEAD TRAUMA

If you suspect a child has been shaken, seek medical attention immediately.

INDICATORS FOR AHT

Environmental Factors:

- Injuries incompatible with history given
- Recent family stress
- Caregiver not seeking medical attention
- History of diapering/toilet training difficulties
- Caregiver at the time was male

Physical Signs/Symptoms:

- Lethargy/decreased muscle tone
- Extreme irritability
- Decreased appetite, poor feeding or vomiting for no reason
- No smiling or vocalization
- Poor sucking or swallowing
- Rigidity or posturing
- Difficulty breathing
- Seizures
- Head or forehead appears larger than usual or soft-spot on head appears to be bulging
- Inability to lift head
- Inability of eyes to focus or track movement or unequal size of pupils

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A CHILD IS SHAKEN?

- The brain bounces back and forth within the skull, injuring or destroying brain tissue.
- Upon shaking, blood vessels feeding the brain are torn leading to bleeding around the brain.
- Blood pools within the skull, creating more pressure and possibly causing additional brain damage.
- Retinal (back of the eye) bleeding can occur.

CONSEQUENCES

Immediate Consequences:

Breathing may stop
Extreme irritability
Seizures
Limp arms and legs
Decreased level of consciousness
Vomiting
Heart may stop
Death

Long-term Consequences:

Learning disabilities
Physical disabilities
Visual disabilities
Speech disabilities
Cerebral Palsy
Seizures
Behavioral disorders
Financial burdens
Death

CHILD ABUSE REPORTING HOTLINE:

KANSAS: 1.800.922.5330

MISSOURI: 1.800.392.3738

MISSOURI (calling from out of state): 573.751.3448



info@sunflowerhouse.org



www.sunflowerhouse.org



913.631.5800



@sunflower_house



facebook.com/SunflowerHouse