

## Abusive Head Trauma - Shaken Baby Syndrome

Abusive Head Trauma - Shaken Baby Syndrome is a particular type of physical abuse that affects infants and toddlers, especially children under 1 year of age. It is the leading cause of death related to child abuse in the United States.

### What Causes Abusive Head Trauma – Shaken Baby Syndrome?

It is usually caused by someone shaking, dropping, throwing, or striking a very young child.

### What Does Abusive Head Trauma – Shaken Baby Syndrome Look Like?

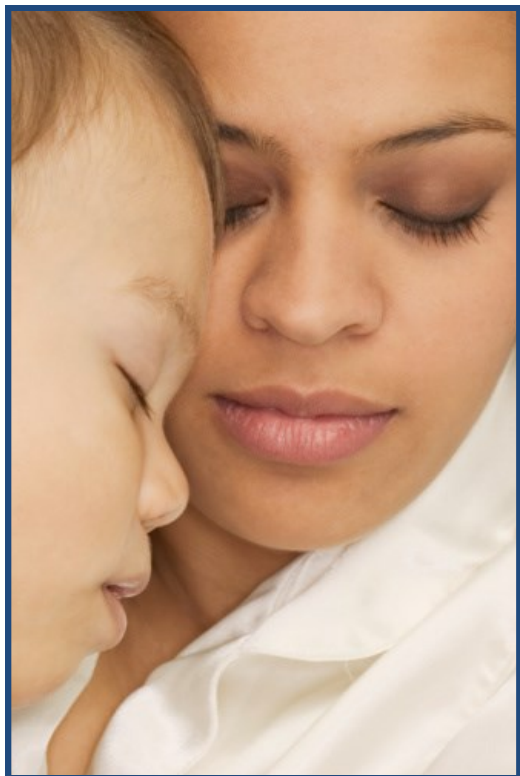
**A child suffering from Abusive Head Trauma – Shaken Baby Syndrome might show:**

- Irritability or fussiness
- Lethargy, trouble staying awake, or excessive sleepiness
- Vomiting
- Shaking or tremors
- Trouble with sucking or swallowing
- Unusually poor appetite
- A dramatic decrease in smiling, cooing, babbling or other attempts to communicate
- Rigidity in the body
- Seizures
- Labored breathing
- Pupils that are not the same size as one another
- An inability to lift his or her own head
- Difficulty focusing his or her eyes or tracking movement
- Coma



---

Infants who have been shaken need prompt medical treatment. Child care providers who notice any signs that could indicate a child has suffered Abusive Head Trauma – Shaken Baby Syndrome should contact authorities and, if necessary, seek emergency medical attention for the child.



## How Can I Help Prevent Abusive Head Trauma – Shaken Baby Syndrome?

If you are a child care provider who works with infants or toddlers, you are required to receive annual training on topics that are specifically related to caring for children under two. One of those topics is Abusive Head Trauma – Shaken Baby Syndrome. Receiving frequent training will help you recognize warning signs that a child has been or is at risk of being abused.

Caring for babies can be extremely challenging. Some of the best ways to prevent Abusive Head Trauma – Shaken Baby Syndrome are by learning stress management techniques and by helping other adults, including parents and other caregivers, who care for infants and toddlers learn strategies to manage their own stress. Know your limits, and ask for a break when you need it. If you see someone else handling an infant or toddler in a rough manner or showing other signs of extreme stress, let your program administrators know immediately.

---

### Sources:

American Academy of Pediatrics (2013). "Abusive Head Trauma: Shaken Baby Syndrome" retrieved from <http://www.healthychildren.org/English/safety-prevention/at-home/Pages/Abusive-Head-Trauma-Shaken-Baby-Syndrome.aspx>

Department of Family and Protective Services (2014). "Minimum Standards for Child-Care Centers" retrieved from [https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/documents/Child\\_Care/Child\\_Care\\_Standards\\_and\\_Regulations/746\\_Centers.pdf](https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/documents/Child_Care/Child_Care_Standards_and_Regulations/746_Centers.pdf)

Department of Family and Protective Services (2014). "Minimum Standards for Child-Care Homes" retrieved from [https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/documents/Child\\_Care/Child\\_Care\\_Standards\\_and\\_Regulations/747\\_Homes.pdf](https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/documents/Child_Care/Child_Care_Standards_and_Regulations/747_Homes.pdf)

Nemours Foundation (2014). "Abusive Head Trauma (Shaken Baby Syndrome)" retrieved from <http://kidshealth.org/parent/medical/brain/shaken.html#>