

Contact information

The name of your therapist is

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Opening times: Monday - Friday, 9am-5pm

Sources:

Information compiled from - Practice Briefing: Safe Use of Weighted Blankets, October (2011), Royal College of Occupational Therapists.

www.sensorydirect.com

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Paediatric Occupational Therapy Service

Advice for parents and carers about weighted blankets



Quality first and foremost

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What are weighted blankets?

Weighted blankets are heavier blankets that can be used to help with self-calming and sensory regulation.

The added weight of the blanket is intended to provide a calming effect giving the feeling of being held, hugged or cuddled. It does this by providing something called deep pressure touch.

Are weighted blankets suitable for babies and toddlers?

Weighted blankets must **not** be used with babies and toddlers as they pose a risk of suffocation. This is because they may struggle to move the blanket off themselves if they become trapped or too hot.

What weight should I use for my child?

Occupational Therapy does not recommend the use of weighted blankets, as there is limited evidence on the benefits of using them. It is a parent/carer's decision to use a weighted blanket.

If you decide to use a weighted blanket, it is important it is heavy enough to be effective but not too heavy so it is uncomfortable to use. The maximum weight used must be no more than 10% of your child's body weight.

No matter what feels best, the blanket must be light enough for your child to easily remove by themselves to avoid suffocating and overheating. It is important any weighted blanket is used in line with the manufacturer's guidelines and instructions for use.

The table opposite is intended as a **guide** to blanket weight or any other weighted items, such as weighted cushions, snakes or ruck sacks. Please seek further advice from the manufacturer if you are unsure about the correct weight to use.

User Weight	Maximum Blanket Weight
3 ½ -4 stone/19-25kg	5.5lbs/2.5kg
4 ½ -5 stone/25-32kg	6.6lbs/3.0kg
5 ½ -6 stone/32-38kg	7.9lbs/3.6kg
6 ½ -8 stone/38-51kg	9.9lbs/4.5kg
8 ½ -10 stone/51-64kg	13lbs/6.0kg
10 ½ -12 stone/64-78kg	15lbs/7.0kg
12 ½ stone/78kg +	17.6lbs/8.0kg

How do I use weighted blankets safely?

- Your child **must** be supervised while under the blanket.
- Your child **must** be able to remove the blanket or get free from the blanket themselves.
- The blanket **must not** be used for longer than 20 minutes.
- The blanket **must not** be used overnight.
- Your child's head and neck **must not** be covered.
- Your child **must not** be rolled in the blanket; it should be placed loosely over them.
- The blanket should fit your child's size; it **must not** drape over the sides of the bed.
- The blanket must **never** be used to restrain your child.

If your child shows **any** of the following reactions you **must** remove the blanket immediately:

- Difficulty breathing
- Nausea/feeling sick
- Increase in temperature/feeling too hot
- Any behaviour or physical reaction that may indicate your child's is uncomfortable or is becoming anxious.