



Positioning Suggestions for Plagiocephaly and Torticollis

- ⦿ ***Change the head position while your baby sleeps.*** Reposition your baby's head when they are sleeping on their back. Even though they will move around throughout the night, it is still a good idea to turn your baby's head to their non-preferred side, or the side that does not have a flat spot. The American Academy of Pediatrics does not recommend using a wedge or other device to keep your baby in one position.
- ⦿ ***Alternate positioning in the crib.*** Consider how you lay your baby down in their crib. Whichever side of your baby's head has a flat spot, or is their preferred side, you will want to position your baby in the crib to encourage active turning of the head to the other side.
- ⦿ ***Alternate the position of the crib within the room.*** Most babies do not like to look at a blank space or wall. Take all toys, activities, and distractions out of the side of the crib that is against the wall. Turn the crib so that the preferred side is toward the wall. Place all toys and stimuli on the side of the crib that is facing the room. This will encourage your baby to look toward their non-preferred side.
- ⦿ ***Switch sides used to hold your baby.*** Many parents hold their baby in the same position every time. Consider changing the position to alter which muscles are being used by your child to look around, and which way they have to turn their head.
- ⦿ ***Hold your baby more than laying them on their back.*** Reduce the amount of time your baby spends lying in a position where the head is resting on a flat surface (car seats, strollers, swings, bouncy seats, play pens). Consider using a baby carrier/"wearing" your baby instead of always having them in a car seat. Holding your baby will reduce the pressure on the head overall. Variety is important.
- ⦿ ***Move the car seat in your car.*** If your baby likes to look out the window and turns their head to rest on the flat spot or preferred side, consider moving the car seat to the other side of the car.
- ⦿ ***Practice tummy time several times a day.*** Provide plenty of supervised time for your baby to lie on their stomach while awake during the day. Tummy time decreases time spent with pressure on the baby's head, strengthens their muscles, and supports motor development.
- ⦿ ***Neck exercises.*** Many babies with a flat spot on the head have at least a degree of torticollis or neck muscle tightness. Uncorrected torticollis cannot only affect the progress on the flat spot but also affect facial growth. At least three times per day, help your baby stretch their neck. Over time, the chin should be able to turn to the shoulder on each side. Additionally, work on ear-to-shoulder stretches. Your physical therapist will provide information on how to stretch your baby's neck correctly.