

BABIES · 4 MIN READ

Torticollis and flat head shape: what parents need to know

Why some babies prefer looking one way, how it links to flat head shape, and the simple things that help.



● What is torticollis?

Torticollis means a baby finds it easier to turn or tilt their head one way than the other. It usually comes from tightness in a neck muscle, often noticed in the first weeks of life. You might spot that your baby always sleeps with their head to the same side, feeds more easily on one breast than the other, or gets grizzly when you try to encourage them to look the 'hard' way.

It's common, it's treatable, and it's nobody's fault. Some babies are simply born with a snugger fit in the womb, and some develop a preference in the early weeks.

● The link with flat head shape

Babies' skulls are soft. If a baby always rests on the same spot, that spot can flatten over time (plagiocephaly). A head-turn preference and a flat spot often go together: the preference causes the resting position, and the flat spot then makes that position even more comfortable.

The good news: helping the neck usually helps the head shape too, especially when you start early.

● What helps at home

Plenty of supervised tummy time while awake, from birth. Feeding, carrying and playing on both sides. Placing interesting things (windows, mobiles, your face) on your baby's less-favourite side. Alternating which end of the cot you lay them down, so the interesting view is always on the harder side.

Physiotherapy adds gentle stretches, positioning advice tailored to your baby, and a plan you can fit into ordinary days. Most babies respond well, and early help tends to mean less to do later.

● When to seek help

If your baby strongly favours one side by around two months, if you can feel a small lump in the neck muscle, if the flat spot seems to be getting worse, or if you're simply worried, speak to your health visitor, your GP, or book an assessment with us. Trust your instinct; you see your baby more than anyone.

This guide is general information written by a paediatric physiotherapist, not medical advice about your child. If you are worried, trust your instinct: speak to your GP or health visitor, or get in touch with us.



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Families can book directly, no GP referral needed. Professionals can refer at

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