

Don't panic if you find a flat spot on your baby's head

The earlier you find a flat spot, the better. If a flat spot develops, consult your healthcare provider. Your baby may be referred to a pediatric physiotherapist for advice on treatment and prevention of flat spots.



Before Treatment



After Treatment



Protect Your Baby's Head Shape

Preventing flat spots on your baby's head

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Flat spots on the head

Your baby can develop a flat spot on their head if they spend too much time lying with their head in one position. This is known as positional plagiocephaly or “flat head”. Plagiocephaly does not affect development of the baby’s brain but can affect the baby’s appearance.

Back to sleep for every sleep

Place your baby on their back for every sleep to lower the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). The rate of SIDS has greatly decreased since caregivers have been educated about the importance of putting their babies to sleep on their backs.

How flat spots happen

Babies are born with large heads, soft skulls, and weak neck muscles. When placed on their back, a baby will often turn their head to one side. The pressure of lying on the same spot for a long time may flatten a baby’s skull. Some babies are born with a slight flat spot, and they may tend to roll to rest on that spot when they are on their backs. At first, babies are unable to switch head positions on their own.

Flat spots can be prevented

Change your baby’s head position

Change your baby’s head position so that equal time is spent lying on both sides of the head, reducing the risk of developing flat spots. A baby tends to look out into their room from their crib to watch you coming and going or to look at interesting objects. Each night, position your baby so that their head is at a different end of the crib, encouraging them to turn their head to a different side.



Hold your baby

Reduce the amount of time your baby spends on their back or in a position where their head is resting against a hard surface. Hold your baby more often when they are awake, taking pressure off their head.

Practice tummy time

Give your baby plenty of supervised tummy time when they are awake. Tummy time can take place when your baby is playing on the floor, lying on your chest, or being held in your arms.

It is important for your baby to spend time on their tummy to develop their neck, back, and trunk muscles.

Limit time spent in car seats and strollers

If your baby spends a lot of time in a car seat, the chance of developing a flat spot will increase. Limit the time your baby spends on their back in strollers, swings, and car seats (when not in a vehicle) to help decrease the risk of developing flat spots.

**Prevent flat spots ...
change your baby’s head
position often.**