

What should I do if my baby has an unusual head shape?

First of all, don't panic! A lot of babies are born with head shapes that are less than perfect. Some babies develop unusual head shapes because their neck muscles are weak, tight, or have restricted movement. Still others develop flattening due to spending time on their backs during the day and night.

When a baby develops flat areas on the back of the head and possibly the forehead, it's called deformational plagiocephaly. Often, this flattening is made worse by a condition called torticollis. Torticollis is a single muscle or group of muscles that are tight or weak on one side of the neck, causing a baby to tilt or turn to one side. The muscle fibers can shorten because of continued resting in one position.

It is very important that an infant be placed on his back to sleep. However, it is also important to a baby's development that he get supervised tummy time and constant repositioning throughout the day.

When sitting, place your baby tummy down across your lap, so you can gently rub and massage his back. Minimize the time your baby spends in rigid carriers except in the car when the seat is needed for safety.

If your baby's head shape doesn't improve, ask your healthcare provider if a specially designed STARband® will help reshape your baby's head. STARband® treatment is safe and effective, and can reshape your baby's head in just 3-4 months. Early detection is important because STARband® treatment is most effective while the baby's head is still actively growing.

For more information, visit www.starbandkids.com



Big brothers or sisters are big helpers with Tummy Time!

What is a STARband® and how can it help my baby?

Some infants develop flattening or asymmetry of their heads (deformational plagiocephaly), even after a developmental program as active as Tummy Time!

If your baby's head shape does not improve after 4 months of age, your pediatrician may refer you to a doctor who specializes in the skull or suggest that you see a professional called an orthotist, who can create a custom-molded STARband® to help shape your baby's head. This special band is called a cranial remolding orthosis. It is worn 23 hours a day and gently guides the baby's head into a more normal shape.



Before STARband® Treatment



After STARband® Treatment

For more information, visit www.starbandkids.com or contact:

Tummy Time!

Fun activities that promote symmetrical head shapes and help babies develop strong neck and trunk muscles

Tummy Time provides parents with ideas and activities to make sure your baby gets enough time on his tummy throughout the day, while he is awake and supervised. These activities include handling, carrying, diapering, positioning, feeding and playing with your baby.

Increasing the amount of time your baby lies on his tummy:

- Promotes muscle development in the neck and shoulders.
- Helps prevent tight neck muscles and the development of flat areas on the back of the baby's head.
- Helps build the muscles your baby needs to roll, sit and crawl.



Tummy Time!

Tummy Time is any supervised activity that positions your baby on his tummy instead of his back when he or she is awake. Tummy Time activities can involve the whole family, and provide a great way to spend time with your baby.

Today's babies spend a lot of time on their backs, which can cause the head to become flat in certain areas. Since the early 90's, the incidence of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) in the United States has dropped by 40% after the American Academy of Pediatrics encouraged parents to place their babies on their backs to sleep. Coupled with this, rigid baby carriers that double as car seats are often used during daytime hours to hold and carry young babies. This combination of night and day time positioning puts extra pressure on the back of the baby's head and can cause it to grow into an abnormal shape. This condition is called deformational plagiocephaly, and is quite common. Caregivers should continue to place their babies on their back to sleep. When the baby is awake, placing the baby on his or her tummy will relieve the pressure on the back of the head and also help the baby's neck and trunk muscles become strong and flexible. Tummy Time actually helps babies develop the skills needed for rolling, sitting, walking, and standing.

Teach these activities to family members and other caretakers, so the activities become an important part of your baby's day.

To download the complete Tummy Time Tools program, please visit www.starbandkids.com.



A great way to have "Tummy Time" with your baby is to lie on your back or in a reclined position and hold your baby on your chest facing you. This will encourage your baby to lift the head to look at you. Gently turn the head to both sides. As your baby grows, less support is needed and your baby will begin to keep the head centered and push up on the arms.



Alternate the position of your baby on the changing table. Roll your baby from side to side as you fasten the diaper tabs. Talk to your baby from different sides as you change his diaper.



Sit with your back supported and knees bent. Position your baby against your legs facing you. Feed your baby with the head positioned in the middle. You can also change the arm the baby is held in for feeding so the baby begins to

look and turn equally to both sides. This also limits the pressure of your arm on the back of your baby's head.



Carry your baby facing away from you with your arm supporting under the chest. Younger babies need their heads and chest supported, but as your baby gains strength in the neck and trunk muscles,

less support is needed. As your baby develops strength, you can play "Super Man" and pretend your baby is flying.



Tummy Time is:

- Any activity that keeps your baby from lying flat in one position against a hard, supporting surface.
- Anytime you carry, position or play with your baby while he is on his belly.
- Beneficial to babies of all ages.
- Fun, and it can be designed to be easy or challenging for your baby.
- Adaptable, and changes as your baby grows and develops strength.
- Always supervised—never leave your baby alone on his tummy.
- A great time to bond with your baby.
- More enjoyable when you play music or give your baby interesting toys to look at and play with.

Try placing your baby over a small roll to support the baby's upper body, or on the tummy over your own lap.

Get down on the floor and play with your baby. Position interesting toys to encourage reaching, propping and hand-eye coordination.



For more fun activities, download the complete Tummy Time™ program at www.starbandkids.com.

