

Online Resources

- Tummy Time - Why and How to do it (video)
www.babycenter.ca
- Pathways - Tummy Time
www.pathways.org
- Children's Healthcare of Atlanta - Tummy Time Tools
www.choa.org
- Canadian Paediatric Society
www.cps.ca
- Canadian Paediatric Society - Positional Plagiocephaly
www.cps.ca/documents/position/positional-plagiocephaly



YOU Can Refer Your Baby to Physiotherapy

A physiotherapist can help you and your baby with any concerns about head shape and tummy time.

We recommend babies be seen as early as possible if you have a concern.

Any parent/caregiver can refer their baby to Physiotherapy at the IWK Health Centre by calling 902-470-8025 and indicating your concerns. **You do not need a doctor's referral.** If you do not live close to the IWK, we will assist in connecting you with a physiotherapist closer to your home.

**IWK HEALTH CENTRE
INFANT AND PRESCHOOL TEAM
902-470-8025**

*IWK Rehabilitation Services, Halifax, NS
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IWK Health

www.iwk.nshealth.ca



IWK Health

TUMMY TIME, HEAD SHAPE AND YOUR BABY

Tummy time should begin as soon as you bring your baby home.

Tummy time is essential because:

- **it prevents flat spots on your baby's head**
- **it promotes healthy physical development**

The safest position for your baby to sleep in is on their back to lower the risk of SIDS (sudden infant death syndrome).



Your Baby's Head Shape

Babies are born with soft heads that are easily molded by staying in one position for too long. Babies who prefer lying on one side may get flat spots.

Plagiocephaly is when a baby's head becomes flat or misshapen on one side.

Brachycephaly is when a baby's head becomes flat or misshapen across the back of the head.



Typical



Plagiocephaly



Brachycephaly

Some babies keep their head turned more to one side due to tight neck muscles. This is called torticollis. A physiotherapist can assess your baby to determine whether your baby's neck muscles are tight.

Decreasing Risk of Flat Spots and Tight Muscles

The risk of flat spots and tight neck muscles can be reduced by limiting the use of reclined devices and practicing regular tummy time with your baby when awake.

Here are some tips for how to make tummy time successful with your baby:

- Sing a song to your baby
- Get face-to-face with your baby
- Practice tummy time when your baby is happy
- Use a mirror to encourage your baby to look at their reflection
- Use brightly coloured or noisy toys to catch your baby's attention

Baby Equipment and Reclined Devices

Supervised tummy time and play in different positions is the best way to support development.

Prolonged use of reclined devices can increase the risk of plagiocephaly and brachycephaly.

Examples of reclined devices include bouncy chairs, car seats, strollers, infant swings, etc.

Try and limit baby's time in these devices to two to three hours total per day (this includes travel time).

