

Head Re-Shaping

Why does my baby's head need re-shaping?

If a baby's head is in the same position all the time, it may get flat in one area from the pressure. This is called flat head or positional plagiocephaly. You need to help reshape your baby's head. Using different positions to keep your baby off the flat part of the head will help. While your baby is awake, you will need to limit the amount of time your baby spends on their back, in the crib, car seat, swing, and bouncy seat. **Babies must always sleep on their backs, alone and in a crib.**

How do I reposition my baby's head while awake?

- **Tummy time.** Lay your baby on their tummy while awake. You will need to watch your baby during this time. Work up to five times a day for up to 15 minutes each time. Use a towel roll under the chest to make it easier to prop your baby up on the elbows. Use a mirror or toys in front to make it more fun. Tummy time can also be done on your chest while lying down, holding your baby with the tummy on your forearm or by putting your baby over your legs as you sit in a recliner chair.
- **Side lying only while awake.** Lay your baby on either side while awake to play. Put a rolled towel behind the back for support. If your baby falls asleep, be sure to lay your baby on the back. Rest their head on the non-flat side of the head while asleep.
- **Front Carriers-Ergobab; Baby Bjorn or sling.** Face your baby toward you if head control is still limited. Face your baby away from you if head control is good.
- **Hold your baby.** This will keep pressure off your baby's head while being held and during feeding. Use interesting toys to help your baby look in the opposite direction of the flat area of the head.
- **Car seat/swing/bouncy seat.** It is harder to keep pressure off the flat area in these. Use these only when needed and only for short periods of time. The Boppy Noggin Nest™ can be used to keep the head in the middle when your baby is in one of these. A towel roll can be used to keep your baby's head from turning toward the flat side.

Look for helpful products to use while awake for different positions. They include:

- Graco Curved Back Sleeper (www.gracobaby.com)
- Quilted Back-Sleep Positioning Wedge by Especially for Baby (www.amazon.com)
- Baby Abby (www.babyabby.com)
- Boppy Noggin Nest Head Support Pillow (www.amazon.com)
- Bumbo chair <http://www.bumbo.com/>
- Exersaucers/ activity centers

ALERT: Call your child's doctor, nurse, or clinic if you have any questions or concerns or if your child has special health care needs that were not covered by this information.

This teaching sheet is meant to help you care for your child. It does not take the place of medical care. Talk with your healthcare provider for diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up.