

TORTICOLLIS

Understanding head preference and supporting comfortable movement



A head tilt or preference to look one way is worth checking.

Torticollis describes a head position. An assessment helps identify what may be contributing and what support fits your baby.

01 WHAT YOU MIGHT NOTICE



HEAD TILT

Head leans toward one shoulder; chin may turn the other way.



ONE-SIDED PREFERENCE

Turns more easily or often toward one side.



FEEDING OR HEAD SHAPE

Prefers feeding on one side, or a flatter area may develop.



MOVEMENT IN PLAY

Uses one side differently or finds some positions harder.

02 HOW PHYSIOTHERAPY CAN HELP

● ASSESS

Neck movement, posture, head shape, symmetry and early movement.

● MAKE A PLAN

Baby-led play, positioning and a home program tailored to your baby.

● REVIEW

Progress together; your physio can demonstrate any hands-on activities.

03 EVERYDAY IDEAS WHILE BABY IS AWAKE



SHORT FLOOR PLAY

Try supervised tummy time and floor play in short, comfortable bursts.



INVITE A TURN

Use your face, voice or a toy on the less-preferred side.



VARY POSITIONS

Change how you hold, carry and approach your baby during the day.



TAKE BREAKS

Limit long stretches in car seats, bouncers and other containers when not travelling.

04 SAFETY AND WHEN TO GET HELP



SAFE SLEEP

Always place baby on their back on a firm, flat, clear sleep surface. No pillows, wedges, positioners or rolled towels. Let baby choose their head position.



ASK YOUR GP OR CHILD HEALTH NURSE

If a head tilt persists, turning is restricted, head shape changes, or feeding or movement is difficult. A GP may also check hips.



SEEK URGENT MEDICAL HELP

A sudden or painful head tilt, injury, fever or appearing very unwell, difficulty swallowing, unusual drooling, repeated vomiting, severe headache, unusual eye movements, poor balance, weakness or unusual sleepiness needs urgent assessment. Call 000 for an emergency.

Follow your baby's cues. Never force a neck stretch; ask your physiotherapist to show you what is right for your baby.