

## Helmet Therapy

Wearing an orthopedic helmet will not delay a child's development or cause neck/head discomfort. Your child should wear the helmet 23 hours per day unless otherwise instructed. There is no charge for the helmet or adjustments as the cost is covered through Saskatchewan Health.



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The Saskatchewan Health Authority works in the spirit of truth and reconciliation, acknowledging Saskatchewan as the traditional territory of First Nations and Métis People.

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## Positional Plagiocephaly



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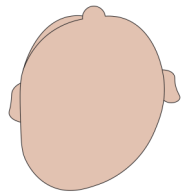
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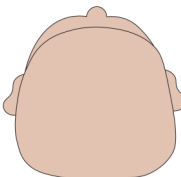
## What is Plagiocephaly/Brachycephaly?

**Plagiocephaly/Brachycephaly** refers to an abnormal head shape due to continuous pressure on the skull over time. A baby's skull is very soft and malleable which allows for the baby's head to fit through the birth canal. However, it can lead to flattening when continuous pressure is placed on one part of their head.

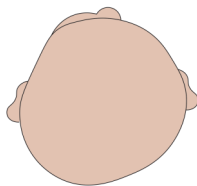
It is important to note that no evidence to date suggests that this is painful or affects their development, but it can affect the baby's appearance.



Plagiocephaly



Brachycephaly



Brachycephaly with Plagiocephaly

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Retrieved from: <https://halo-care.com>

## What can you do?

**Goal:** Keep pressure off of the flat spot of their head as much as possible.

Treatment is individually tailored to your baby's needs, age, severity, and developmental milestones. Initially, treatment is aimed at taking advantage of the baby's soft skull bones and rapid brain growth in the first year of life. The goal is to passively allow the skull to round out by limiting any further pressure to the already flattened area. Babies younger than 6 months are treated with aggressive repositioning techniques and tummy time activities. Remolding helmets may be considered for babies 6 to 9 months.

### Counter Positioning

**Tummy Time**— Encourage tummy time for play.

**Car seat, swing, bouncy chair** – Leave car seat in the car. Use other carriers or strollers to encourage the baby to look around and allow for a change in pressure on their head. Limit swing and bouncy chair use.

**Sleeping** – Babies should always be put to sleep on their back without any additional rolls, pillows, wedges, etc. If they have a preference to turn one direction, always turn their head to the opposite direction when you lie them down (off of their flat side).

**Feeding** –If baby has a flat spot on one side of their head, always try to nurse/bottle feed while putting the least amount of pressure as possible on the flattened spot. This may mean bottle feeding on the opposite side or attempting different nursing positions (more upright) while ensuring the baby can still successfully nurse. If feeding in a high chair, offer food from in front to keep them as midline as possible.

**Diaper change** – If baby has a flat spot on one side of their head, place your baby on the change table to encourage him/her to turn to the non-flat side of their head.

## Torticollis

Torticollis in babies occurs when there is tightness in a muscle called the sternocleidomastoid (SCM). This muscle assists in the side bend of the neck in one direction and rotate the head to the opposite direction.

If babies have this tightness, they will have a positional preference which can lead to a flat spot on the back of your baby's head.



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