

WHAT IS PLAGIOCEPHALY?

A PARENTS GUIDE TO BABY FLAT HEAD SYNDROME



Almost half of all infants will experience some degree of head flattening. This is known as Baby Flat Head Syndrome or Plagiocephaly. Plagiocephaly is **extremely common** and **very treatable**.

WHAT IS PLAGIOCEPHALY?

Baby Flat Head, or Plagiocephaly, is when a baby experiences abnormal flattening at the back of the head. It can range from very mild flattening to more severe cases.



PLAGIOCEPHALY



BRACHYCEPHALY

Plagiocephaly includes positional plagiocephaly (one side becomes flattened) as well as brachycephaly (both sides become flattened). The condition tends to happen during the first few months of life when babies spend most of their time on their backs.

PLAGIOCEPHALY FACTS

Here are some things that parents should know about Baby Flat Head:

- Studies show that almost half of all babies in the United States experience some flattening in infancy.¹
- Helmet therapy is quick. In fact, babies who begin treatment at 3 months of age usually require just two months of helmet therapy.
- Most infants will finish cranial remodeling within 12 weeks when treatment is started between the age of 3-6 months.²

RISK FACTORS FOR PLAGIOCEPHALY

There are several risk factors for developing plagiocephaly, including:

- LOWER HEAD CIRCUMFERENCE
- LOWER BIRTH WEIGHT
- MULTIPLES PREGNANCY
- BACK SLEEPING
- ADVANCED MATERNAL AGE

The majority of infants who develop plagiocephaly do so because of consistently laying on their backs.

TUMMY TIME / REPOSITIONING



Babies should start tummy time as early as possible to encourage strength and development.⁴ By spending time on their tummy, babies spend less on their backs, reducing pressure on the back of their heads.

You should also reposition your baby throughout the day to be sure they are not laying in the same position for too long. Change the side of the head they are laying on as well as their position to avoid flattening.

TREATMENT OPTIONS

In mild cases of flattening, tummy time and repositioning may be enough to allow the head to return to a more symmetrical shape. In cases of moderate to severe flattening, the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends cranial remolding or helmet therapy.



FAMILY SUPPORT

When parents start to notice flattening, there is a range of emotions you might experience. The reality is plagiocephaly is very common and easy to treat. There are a few things that parents should keep in mind should they start to blame themselves.

- **It's not your fault!** Even when you take every precaution it can still happen.
- The treatment is not as bad as you might think. Most babies adjust to helmet wearing with little to no difficulty.
- If your baby does need a helmet the treatment is very fast. In just a few weeks your baby will be helmet-free!

Helmet treatment is safe, comfortable, and effective in treating Baby Flat Head.

Sources:

1 - <https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/132/2/298>

2 - <https://www.aans.org/en/Patients/Neurosurgical-Conditions-and-Treatments/Positional-Plagiocephaly>

3 - <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s00431-018-3212-0>

4 - <https://www.parents.com/baby/development/physical/tummy-time-guide/>

FOR MORE INFO AND SUPPORT VISIT:

PPODKIDS.COM