



# TIPS TO PREVENT FLAT SPOTS AND TORTICOLLIS



## 1. BACK TO SLEEP, TUMMY TO PLAY!

- Start tummy time from day 1 and make it fun! Tummy time on caregiver's chest is a cozy place to start
- Strength gained in this position is the foundation for all motor skills
- Place baby on tummy every time she wakes
- Aim for at least 3 times per day. Start with 5 min and gradually increase

## 2. ENCOURAGE BABY TO TURN BOTH WAYS

- Alternate holding baby on your right and left while breast/bottle feeding and while carrying
- Put interesting toys on both sides while playing
- Alternate baby's direction of position in crib and on changing mat



## 3. HELP BABY FIND THE MIDLINE

- Play, make eye contact, and sing with baby in your lap facing you
- For babies that are eating solids, position high chair directly facing you while spoon feeding
- Encourage head and body in midline using tightly rolled thin blankets or washcloth towels while in the car seat or stroller if baby needs more support

## 4. LIMIT TIME IN BABY "HOLDERS"

- Prolonged time (10+ min) in infant swings, reclined seats, and rockers increase pressure on the back of the head and can make flat spots and rotated head position worse
- Take baby out of infant car seat when you're out of the car
- Set up a safe area on the floor as the first choice for playtime for free movement and exploration



## 5. CALL A PHYSICAL THERAPIST

- If you notice flat spots, consistent head tilt or head turning, get help early
- Early PT treatment results in faster and better outcomes
- PT can help baby achieve equal range of motion and strength for healthy motor development