

Treating Torticollis



Torticollis, known as Wryneck, is a shortening of a neck muscle which helps to tilt and rotate the head. Its shortening results in the tilting of the head towards the affected side and rotation of the face towards the opposite side.



What is Torticollis?

- Abnormal positioning of the head and neck
- Caused by tightness of the sternocleidomastoid muscle
- Usually affecting infants under 12 months old
- Can be present at birth or develop over time



How to Prevent

- Less than 2 hours a day in a container car seat, stroller, bouncer seat, swing, rocker)
- Encourage tummy time multiple times throughout the day
- Utilize variety of positions for play (belly, back and sides)
- Alternate which side you hold and interact with child



What to Watch for

- Persistent head tilt
- Only turns head towards one side
- A bump in your child's neck on one side
- Using hand or arm more than the other
- Only rolling to one side
- Difficulty feeding on one side
- Struggling with tummy time



Ways to Treat

- Position toys and engage with infant on their least preferred side
- Alternate the head of the bed in the crib
- Switch the side of the car the car seat is on
- Encourage midline positioning with towel rolls or torticollis pillows when in containers (with supervision)
- If the tilt is severe or not improving with these methods seek an evaluation from a pediatric physical/ occupational therapist

References:

Losquadro-Liddle, T. and Yellin, P.B (2018). *Why motor skills matter: improving your child's physical development to enhance learning and self-esteem.*

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