

# FACT SHEET

## Torticollis

Have you noticed your baby's head tilting to one side or them preferring to look in one direction?

Infant torticollis is what causes this and is the result of a tightened muscle on one side of the neck. It is common, affecting 3 in every 100 babies and in most cases easily treated. Your baby will likely have been born with the condition (congenital torticollis) and is usually due to their position in utero or injury during birth. Babies can also develop it after birth (acquired torticollis) and is usually the result of trauma or infection.

Although your baby may be born with torticollis, you may not notice for 6-8 weeks when they start to gain more control of their head and neck.

### Symptoms to look for may include

- > Head tilt or rotation to one side.
- > Reduced range of motion to move baby's head.
- > Flattening on one side of baby's head
- > Baby may prefer feeding from one side only
- > A small lump on baby's neck
- > Plagiocephaly or a flat spot behind one ear

The best way to manage torticollis is to encourage your baby to turn their head in both directions and to see a physiotherapist. This is important to ensure this is in fact what is causing your child's symptoms and to provide home exercises and monitor their progress. They can provide range of movement and strength exercises and track their head shape development and progress. They can make recommendations about how to reduce baby's head flatness and improve their movement restrictions.

Your physiotherapist can also check them for associated conditions and ensure they are developing appropriately and meeting their milestones.

