



Torticollis: A Parent Resource Guide

What is torticollis?

Torticollis, sometimes referred to as “wry neck,” is a condition in which a baby’s neck muscles are tight, weak, or a combination of both. Left untreated, babies with torticollis can have poor head control and delayed gross motor development.

There are two types of torticollis – congenital muscular torticollis (CMT) and acquired torticollis. Both are characterized by a tightness and weakness of the neck muscles, primarily related to injury to the sternocleidomastoid muscle.

An infant or baby with torticollis will often tilt his head/neck one way, and look in the opposite direction. While often present at birth, torticollis typically is noticed within the first couple of months as a baby begins to gain better head control.

A referral for therapy is often recommended when a pediatrician observes a pattern of movement or behavior that indicates the need for a professional to take a closer look. An evaluation may also be recommended based on parent observations or concerns.

How is torticollis treated?

A skilled pediatric physical therapist will perform a comprehensive assessment and develop an individualized treatment program. Treatment typically includes physical therapy sessions with localized strengthening and stretching exercises that increase a baby’s neck range of motion.

Early treatment is essential. Left untreated, torticollis can have immediate and lasting implications related to a baby’s development of proper reaching, rolling, sitting, crawling and walking skills. Later implications can impact higher-level balance and bilateral coordination skills, even affecting a baby’s eyesight. Babies with torticollis also could develop a permanent flattening of the head on one side and/or asymmetrical facial features.

Who treats torticollis?

A skilled pediatric physical therapist trained in treating torticollis is a key component to ensuring a successful outcome. However, parental involvement is vital to a baby’s success. Proper toy placement and performing stretches and exercises at home greatly increase a baby’s chances for normal development.

If you would like more information or have any questions regarding torticollis and treatment, please don’t hesitate to contact us our office at (770) 345-2804.

IN HARMONY PEDIATRIC THERAPY
4280 HICKORY FLAT HIGHWAY, SUITE 108
CANTON, GA 30115
PHONE (770) 345-2804 FAX (770) 783-5049
www.inharmonypediatrictherapy.com