

Advice Note: Plagiocephaly

Dear GP,

Thank you for your referral with concerns about this patient's head shape. Based on your description and the photo provided, we believe it to be a benign positional plagiocephaly.

Plagiocephaly is also known as flattened head syndrome. It may be associated with torticollis. It is very common and occurs in 1 in 300 live births.

The characteristic features include:

- Infant's face may show head tilt and contra-lateral facial flattening
- Ear on the flattened side may be pushed forward when viewed from above
- There may be bulging on the side opposite from the flattening
- The forehead may be asymmetrical or uneven
- Normal head growth
- Normal development

Management:

- Education and reassurance
<https://www.healthinfo.org.nz/patientinfo/114677.pdf>
<https://www.kidshealth.org.nz/positional-head-flattening-babies>
- Alternating infant's sleep positions (left and right occiput)
- Avoiding using the car seat when not in car
- Tummy time
- If associated torticollis – referral to physiotherapy

Please do not hesitate to re-refer if you have ongoing concerns.

Kind regards,

Hutt Paediatric Team