



Advice Note: Large anterior fontanelle / delayed closure

Dear GP,

Thank you for your referral with concerns about this patient's large anterior fontanelle / delayed closure.

The size of anterior fontanelle is highly variable and ranges from 0.6-4.6 cm in term babies and can further enlarge in the first few months of life.

The age of closure is also variable and ranges from 8 to 24 months with median of 13 months. The fontanelles of babies born prematurely tend to close at a later time. The closure occurs by 24 months in 96% of patients.

The most common causes of delayed closure of the anterior fontanelle include:

- Normal variation
- Familial macrocephaly
- Congenital hypothyroidism
- Rickets
- Down syndrome
- Raised intracranial pressure

In cases of concern, it is very important to monitor head circumference and development carefully. This can be done in primary care.

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

Kind regards,

Hutt Paediatric Team