



sids
SUDDEN INFANT DEATH SERVICES
of illinois, inc.

Avoiding a Flat Head

How can I keep my baby from having a flat head?

In order to have a nice round head, a baby needs to be placed in a variety of positions. Babies should be on their backs for sleep. But when they are awake, they need to have supervised "Tummy Time".

Even from the first day baby is brought home from the hospital, they can have tummy time 3 times per day for about a minute each time. As they become stronger and can hold their heads up, you can have increasingly longer periods of supervised tummy time.

It is also important for the baby to have his/her position in the crib changed. For example, when baby goes down for a nap, place him on his back with his feet at the foot of the crib. For his next sleep period, place baby with his feet at the head of the crib. The

baby will turn his head toward the door to be able to see and hear you when you come in to the room.

Do not overuse the car seat carriers, bouncy chairs or swings. When baby spends too much time in these seats, they can slump forward into an unsafe position that makes it more difficult for baby to breathe deeply. It also does not help babies develop muscle strength in their upper body. Carry your baby in your arms instead of using the carrier all the time. This will also help prevent your baby from getting a flat head.

If you bottle feed your baby, make certain that you alternate the way you hold your baby from feeding to feeding. Sometimes hold baby in left arm, sometimes in the right.

It is important for baby's normal growth and development that they have to turn their head in different directions.

If you have any questions, ask your doctor or call SIDS of Illinois at 1-800-432-SIDS (7437).