

Helpful tips for infants with a body shaped like a banana or arch

Banana or Bow Shape

Some infants have a banana-shaped body. This is usually due to uneven muscle strength on the right and left sides of the body or reduced mobility in the neck, back, and pelvis. A bow shape occurs when the baby arches their head and body backward.

These conditions can affect breastfeeding, cause tension and discomfort in the body, and delay the baby's natural development. Through movement, exercises, positioning, and handling techniques that encourage your baby to actively use their muscles, you can help correct these conditions.



You can do this daily:

Handling/Positioning Your Baby:

- Try to gently straighten your baby's body and support them with blankets if needed to help maintain a more "aligned" position.
- Lay your baby on their side, on the "shorter" side, with the shoulder and hip gently pulled apart.
- When carrying your baby or when they are sitting with you, try to encourage a more neutral body position.
- Engage with your baby from the opposite side, so they naturally try to straighten themselves.

Exercises/Movement:

- Bend both arms in front of the body, out to the sides, and up/down several times at a slow and steady pace.
- Gently turn the head from side to side as far as possible, repeating several times in a calm manner.
- Bend and stretch both legs.
- Bring both knees up to the stomach and then to the chest/shoulders several times at a slow pace.
- Gently lift both legs over the head so the baby rolls smoothly along their spine.
- Bend the legs and move them together from one side to the other, repeating several times while providing light support on the chest to encourage gentle spinal rotation.
- Place your baby on their tummy as much as possible when awake to develop and strengthen the muscles and joints in the back. Strong muscles and joints are essential building blocks for lifting and moving the head, rolling, crawling, and sitting up.

When should you seek help?

Talk to your health visitor and/or your doctor:

- If the recommended advice and exercises do not improve the condition within 2-4 weeks.
- If you are concerned about your baby's development and well-being.
- Always consult your health visitor or doctor before reaching out to a specialist, such as a physical therapist, chiropractor, or osteopath.