

When our daughter was two months old, our pediatrician pointed out that she has the beginnings of a misshapen head. My wife and I had both noticed that she preferred to look to the left, spending as much as 80-90% of her time facing in that direction, and that combined with her spending 16-18 hours on her back was having an impact. We had never really noticed the shape of her head before, but a quick measurement showed us that the distance between her left eye and left ear was noticeably shorter than the distance between her right eye and right ear. She was developing asymmetrically, and the diagnosis was infant torticollis (a tightening of the neck muscles, common in naturally delivered infants) and plagiocephaly. The recommendation was to wait and see how things developed, but that a helmet was probably in the future.

We'd had an extremely difficult pregnancy with our daughter, filled with visits to over half a dozen doctors, surgeons and other medical specialists, and we'd been given more than our fair share of contradictory pieces of advice. That experience left us with two things: an instinctive skepticism to believing the first piece of medical advice we heard, and an unwillingness to wait for anything. We made an appointment with a helmet specialist immediately; they confirmed the asymmetry, said it would take about a month for a helmet to be made, that our daughter would be wearing it 22 hours a day for approximately four months, and that it would correct the asymmetry without too much difficulty. It would not do anything for the torticollis, but since multiple sources had told us that would go away on its own at around a year old, we weren't especially concerned. Or more accurately, we didn't think there was anything we could do about it, although we did begin seeing a physical therapist to see if there were any exercises we could do to help our daughter.

Neither of us were excited about putting our daughter in a helmet, despite multiple assurances that most babies adjust to them very quickly. Thankfully, my wife's lactation consultant had heard of Dr. Grimshaw, and we made an appointment to see him and get a second opinion.

Our visit with him was unlike any other doctor's visit we'd had up to that point. He was calm and relaxed, with no apparent need to hurry over to his next appointment. He said that he saw approximately 40 babies a year like our daughter, that his experience led him to believe we would need to have 3 or 4 appointments with him, that he could correct the torticollis, and that she wouldn't need a helmet. He wasn't arrogant about it, just very quietly confident that he knew what he was doing. He used a handful of classical medical terms but mostly spoke about 'membranes' and 'loosening areas of pressure' and things like that. It was a bit more New-Agey than either my wife or I were used to, and we weren't entirely certain what to make of it.

Then he spent about 20 minutes physically manipulating our daughter – touching her very gently on her back, neck, and head. For 15 of those minutes he had her in a front-facing carrier, walking slowly in circles around his office while he continued the manipulation. Quite frankly, we had no idea what he was doing.

When that was finished, he brought our daughter back and said that he had successfully loosened some of the tightness in our daughter's back and neck, and that once it had been loosened, it was effectively cured. He said we should expect to see her turning to the right now as often as to the left, and that her head would begin to assume a more symmetrical shape as it continued to grow. There was no medicine, no rigorous physical therapy schedule we were asked to follow. My wife and I left that appointment wondering if we had just wasted our time.

But it worked. By the next day both of us had noticed the change. Our daughter always slept facing to the left, and now she would turn in both directions, sometimes waking up facing to the right. A week or two after that first appointment, we met with the physical therapist again. At our initial meeting, she had found a 10 millimeter asymmetry in our daughter's head. (Anything above 7 merits a helmet.) Now that asymmetry was down to 5 millimeters. She said she'd never seen a correction happen that quickly. It was incredible.

We went back for two more visits to Dr. Grimshaw, each about a month apart, to continue working on any residual tightness in our daughter's back and neck, which were (according to Dr. Grimshaw) the causes of the asymmetry. Each time he spent about 15-25 minutes physically manipulating our daughter, always very gently. She almost never cried; in fact, she seemed to like what he was doing. At our third visit, we mentioned to him that our daughter was having trouble bringing her hands close together when she was on her stomach; she couldn't really get her elbows underneath her to help proper her chest and head up. He had my wife breastfeed her (or hold her in the breastfeeding position) so that he could get at her from an angle he couldn't do while holding her in the carrier. After that session he told us that he had managed to loosen another source of tightness and that we should expect to see her more comfortably putting her hands closer to her body when she was on her stomach. No less than two days later, that is exactly what we saw.

Our daughter is just over five months old now, and her asymmetry has all but disappeared. The distance between her eyes and ears is virtually identical now on both sides, and she shows almost no sign of any physical stiffness or tightness. My wife and I are both confident that we will not need to get our daughter a helmet, and we're equally convinced that a helmet would not have helped with the torticollis.

Dr. Grimshaw not only fixed our daughter's asymmetry, he fixed the underlying cause of it. I wish I could say that I knew how he did what he did. I really don't. But I know for certain that it worked for our girl. He managed in three 60-90 minute visits to accomplish more than we would have done by putting our daughter in a helmet 22 hours a day for four months.

In fact, this experience has changed how I think about medicine. Most doctors talk to you for a few minutes, check your heart/lungs/throat/ears, make an educated guess about what's wrong with you, then either tell you to go home and wait for it to go away or else give you a prescription for something that should take care of the issue. That's really all I've ever known medicine could be. But Dr. Grimshaw *does* something. He didn't just treat our daughter's symptoms; he treated the *causes* of those symptoms.

I left our first appointment with him wondering if we had wasted our money. I left our third appointment enormously indebted to him. His is an impressive gift, and I would happily recommend him to anyone who might benefit from what he knows how to do.