

Tummy Time

For all babies from birth

Why supervised tummy time is important for babies

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Tummy time is good for me because...

- ✓ My neck, shoulder, arm and back muscles will get stronger. I use these muscles to move around
- ✓ I can see the world from different angles, which helps my brain to develop
- ✓ It also prevents me from developing a flat spot on the head

As soon as I am born...

- ✓ Start supervised tummy time when I am awake, not too tired or hungry
- ✓ Offer supervised tummy time frequently during the day when I am awake
- ✓ Place me on my back for sleep (supine)

At the beginning I may be...

- Unsettled
- Just able to stay on my tummy for a minute or two during playtime

! Remember

Parents and carers are often very tired and can fall asleep easily during the day. Make sure I am put in my own safe sleep space if either of us start getting sleepy

Easy start

Carry me over your...



Shoulder



Arm



Chest



Lap

Tummy play on the floor

- ✓ I like to play on a comfortable firm mattress or bunny rug
- ✓ A rolled towel or cloth nappy under my armpits and chest will give me more support (please remove towels before you place me to sleep on my back)
- ✓ I can lift up my head more easily if I'm propped on my elbows
- ! Never leave me alone or unsupervised on my tummy, as it is dangerous if I fall asleep or get my airways covered

Don't give up trying!

I will get better if I practise a few times a day

Don't leave me alone!

I love to watch your face, so get down on my level, talk and sing to me or get a toy and play with me

Tummy Time

I also enjoy other tummy positions



Bath time



Exercise Ball



Change table

When I am 2-3 months I can...

Stay on
my tummy
for 10-15
minutes

Lift my head
up and look
around

Key strategies

To ensure a fun and successful tummy playtime:

- ✓ Choose a comfortable time when your baby is awake, e.g. after a nappy change, bath or sleep
- ✓ Try a variety of tummy positions
- ✓ Interact with your baby, e.g. talking, singing, playing with musical toys or textured toys
- ! Never leave your baby alone or unsupervised during tummy time

Key Points to Remember

- ✓ Tummy time helps to strengthen baby's neck, shoulder and back muscles
- ✓ Tummy time helps to protect baby's head shape
- ✓ It is recommended you start tummy time from birth and practice regularly
- ✓ It is normal for babies to find tummy time difficult to begin with. Use a variety of different positions and tips listed to help them enjoy it more and get better at it
- ✓ Babies with large heads or those who were born early often find tummy time a little more difficult and may need more time to improve at it- practice makes perfect!
- ! You must always supervise your baby when they are on their tummy and during any tummy time positions

Remember

- ✓ Back to sleep
- ✓ Tummy to play
- ✓ Sit up to watch the world

Do you need more advice?

Remember that it is normal for your baby to find tummy time difficult to begin with...

If you remain concerned or are worried about any of the following, please seek medical advice from your GP, maternal, child and family health nurse, Paediatrician or paediatric physiotherapist:

- Your baby isn't improving at tummy time after six to eight weeks of age
- Your baby feels very stiff or floppy
- If your baby is six weeks old and not making eye contact or focusing on toys
- If your baby is developing a misshapen head or a strong preference to have their head on one side
- If your baby is not moving both sides of their body the same

Red Nose Safe Sleep Advice Hub
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