

BABY BYTES

For families with infants and young children

Tummy Time

Health professionals recommend placing babies on their backs to sleep and their tummies to play as part of a daily routine. Just a few minutes a day, a few times a day, can help your baby get used to "tummy time" and help strengthen their muscles and develop motor skills. If you begin early and maintain a consistent schedule, your baby will learn to love tummy time.



DID YOU KNOW???

Tummy Time...

- Is something babies of all ages can benefit from.
- Is an important part of a baby's daily routine; recommendation is to provide at least 30 minutes of tummy time spread throughout the day while baby is awake.
- Helps your baby develop muscle strength in their neck, back, upper trunk, and arms in order to lift their head and look in either direction.
- Helps to prevent your baby from developing a flat head.
- Helps your baby to roll, sit, crawl and pull to a standing position sooner.
- Helps your baby's arms become stronger and their hands open up so that they can reach for toys or hold toys when they are lying on their back or sitting up. Reaching for objects develops hand-eye co-ordination.

GENERAL TIPS FOR TUMMY TIME

- Babies should be placed on a firmly padded surface when they are awake and you are watching them.
- Introduce tummy time play gradually when your baby is content, energetic, alert and tolerant.

- Babies like to be repositioned when they are awake and playing. Give your baby time in other positions, and then return your baby to tummy for play!

ACTIVITIES AND SUGGESTIONS

Tummy-Down Carry - Slide one hand under your baby's tummy and between baby's legs when carrying your baby tummy down. Cuddle your baby close to your body.

Lap Soothe - Place your baby face-down across your lap to burp or soothe them. A hand on your baby's bottom will help steady and calm your baby.

Tummy Minute - Place your baby on their tummy for one or two minutes every time you do a diaper change. Start a few minutes at a time and try to work up to an hour throughout the day.

Tummy to Tummy - Lay down on your back and place your baby on your chest. This will allow your baby to be face to face with you.

Eye-Level Smile - Try lying on the floor with your baby. Roll up a towel or small blanket and place under baby's upper chest for support. Sing, smile, and laugh with your baby!

Remember, you are their favorite toy!

Tummy Play - Place a bright coloured toy, ball, or mirror in front of your baby while your baby is on their tummy. For older babies, toys placed just out of reach will encourage movement.

References: Elgin St. Thomas Public Health Accessed from Pathways.org, Canadian 24-hour Movement Guidelines for the Early Years (0 - 4 years)

Back to Sleep

Remember...



Tummy to Play

Every bit of tummy time makes a difference!

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