

Tummy Time

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Tummy time is an activity that keeps your baby from lying flat in one position. It can help strengthen your baby's head and neck muscles and allow them to explore their surroundings. Tummy time is important to help your baby advance their developmental skills.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends tummy time 2 to 3 times each day for short periods of time for newborns. This can be as little as 3 to 5 minutes. You should increase the amount of time as your baby gets older. The goal is to get up to 60 minutes of tummy time each day by 3 months old.

Place your baby on their stomach when they are awake and someone is watching. A good time to give your baby some tummy time may be after each diaper change or after waking up from a nap.

Do not put your baby on a small pillow or other prop when they are sleeping. Your baby should be placed on their back to sleep.

Benefits of Tummy Time

Tummy time can:

- help prevent flat spots on the head
- strengthen your baby's head and neck muscles
- strengthen the muscles your baby needs to roll, sit and crawl.

Stages of Tummy Time

- **0 to 2 months:** Your baby may only be able to lift their head for short periods of time. Your baby may start to prop themselves on their arms.
- **3 to 4 months:** Your baby may be able to lift their head and look around while propping themselves on their elbows. Your baby may start to reach for toys while on their tummy.
- **5 months and older:** Your baby may be able to lift their head and look around while pushing up onto extended elbows. Your baby will eventually start to tuck their knees in to get ready to start crawling.

Tips for Successful Tummy Time

- Place a mirror in front of your baby. They may enjoy looking at their reflection.
- Place toys just out of reach of your baby, so your baby will spend time reaching for them or looking at them.
- Play with your baby. Lie down in front of your baby and talk or sing to them.
- If your baby struggles with tummy time, start with shorter periods of time and change positions more often.
- You can also try lying down and laying your baby on your chest and cuddling.