

Tummy time

Rationale:

Tummy time happens when your baby lies on his stomach with weight on his forearms. Tummy time builds head, neck and upper body strength for when your baby is older. While he is asleep, your baby spends a lot of time on his back with his head in one position. This can cause flat spots on the back of his head. Tummy time helps prevent this.

Age range information

0-6 months

What you need

- A flat spot on your floor or outside in a garden or park.
- A blanket for your baby to lie on.
- Toys of different colours and textures, like a soft ball, rattle, non-breakable mirror or books.

How to do it

Start tummy time soon after birth, as part of your baby's daily play. In the first few weeks, try tummy time for 1-2 minutes, 2-3 times a day, at different times of the day. Your baby can build up to 10-15 minutes a day. Here's how:

- Lie your baby on his stomach on the blanket. Place safe objects and toys close to your baby. Supervise your baby during tummy time.
- Make tummy time interesting for your baby: place toys of different colours and textures all around him so he is encouraged to turn his head.
- Get down on the floor next to your baby. Move toys from side to side in front of his face. This encourages him to move, lift and turn his head.
- Turn pages in picture books or magazines or put a non-breakable mirror next to your baby so he can see his reflection. This develops his eye strength and keeps him interested.
- Let your baby know you are there by talking and singing, stroking his back or tickling his hands.
- If your baby does not like tummy time on the floor, try tummy time on a rolled-up towel or on your lap.

Adapting for older children

As your baby gets stronger and starts moving more, make sure the environment is safe for him. For example, clear away dangerous things like furniture that he could bump his head on.

As your baby learns to control his movements more, you can hold toys just out of reach so your baby has to stretch or wriggle towards them. This helps his body develop.



Recommended Reads by the National Library Board

Recommended Reads

- [Tummy Time](#)
- [Black and White](#)
- [Healthy Posture for Babies and Children: Tools for Helping Children to Sit, Stand, and Walk Naturally](#)