

WHY TUMMY TIME MATTERS



Tummy time involves giving your baby time on their tummy while they are awake.

Tummy time

- helps to develop the muscles of the neck back and shoulders
- supports your baby to meet their physical milestones such as rolling, sitting, crawling, standing even walking
- increases body awareness
- reduces the possibility of developing flat head syndrome



When to start and for how long

Tummy time can start from birth. It is a gentle and gradual process. Initially your baby will only tolerate a minute or two. So try short periods a few times a day and gradually build up to longer periods. Make it a part of your daily routine.

Avoid tummy time immediately after a feed.

Tummy time is best done when your baby is happy and alert. If too close to sleep time or if they are hungry, they will be unsettled.

Be safe

Supervise your baby during tummy to ensure their safety. As they start to get stronger and begin to roll and move clear a safe place for them.

Only do tummy time when your baby is awake. It is important babies sleep on their backs due to the risk of SIDS.

Positions for Tummy Time

Tummy time can be done on a blanket on the floor but there are many variations you can try particularly if they are not happy on the floor. The idea is to challenge them against gravity, so they are having to work the upper body to lift.

Suggested positions include

- chest to chest
- lie on your back and raise knees to chest and have baby on legs (take care to ensure they are safe)
- lay them on your lap
- lay them over your arm



Making Tummy Time Fun

There are lots of things you can do to make tummy time fun and extend the time your baby stays on their belly.

- roll up a blanket and put it under their chest for support
- get down on the floor with your baby - make eye contact with and talk or sing to them
- give them toys or safe objects for them to play with or put them just out of their reach to encourage them to reach out for them
- put a book in front of them and read to them
- put a mirror in front of them so they can look up and see their reflection
- get older siblings involved in tummy time
- tummy time is the perfect time for a back massage
- take your tummy time outside

