

WHAT IS TUMMY TIME?

Tummy Time is any time that your baby spends on his/her tummy. And you can start Tummy Time the day you bring your baby home from the hospital! Every time your baby has Tummy Time, they will gain better neck and head control, plus strengthen their upper body.

Not only will the suggestions and activities provided in this brochure help to promote a nicely shaped head, they will also provide opportunities to bond and play with your baby. These guidelines have been developed to make Tummy Time fun for your baby, as well as to help prevent developmental delays that can occur with babies who sleep on their backs. If you have questions or concerns regarding your baby's development, please contact your healthcare provider.

The Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) has recommended that you place your baby on his or her back to sleep to lower the risk for Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). For more information visit www.sids.org.

WHAT IS SIDS?

SIDS is the sudden death of an infant under one year of age which remains unexplained after a thorough case investigation, including performance of a complete autopsy, examination of the death scene, and review of the clinical history.

To help reduce the risk of SIDS:

- Place infants to sleep on their backs, even though they may sleep more soundly on their stomachs.
- Select a baby bed with a firm mattress. There should be nothing in the bed but the baby - no covers, pillows, bumper pads, positioning devices or toys.
- Do not place your baby to sleep in an adult bed because they are not safe for babies.
- Do not over-clothe the infant while he sleeps. Just use enough clothing to keep the baby warm without having to use blankets. Keep the room at a temperature that is comfortable for you.

For more information and additional ways to reduce the risk of SIDS, visit www.sids.org. Information in this brochure was provided by SIDS of Illinois (www.sidsillinois.org).

Faxton St. Luke's
HEALTHCARE 

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Tummy Time

Tips & Tools

The importance of **supervised**
Tummy Time



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TUMMY TIME TIPS

Back-slept babies are often fussy when first starting to play on their tummies. That's why it is important to start Tummy Time within the first days of being home.

- Always place baby on a firm, safe surface for Tummy Time activities. Avoid water beds, bean bag chairs and padded furniture.
- When possible, limit use of strollers, swings, car seats and bouncy seats during baby's awake times. Vary baby's position at least every 20 minutes throughout the day during play time.
- Introduce Tummy Time when your baby is the most tolerant and rested. Give breaks between activities and gradually work to increase time spent on tummy.
- Parents should respond to cries, but continue Tummy Time experiences as the baby's tolerance increases.
- Talk with your doctor about Tummy Time for play. Premature and special-needs babies may have unique circumstances that need consideration. Consult a pediatric, physical, occupational or developmental therapist for more information.

TUMMY TIME should always be supervised by an adult.

NEVER leave a baby unattended, with young siblings, or with pets while on his/her tummy.

TUMMY TIME TOOLS

Newborns

- Lay baby on your chest facing you. Talk and sing to your baby to encourage him to lift and move his head.
- Infants often tolerate tummy (prone) position more in an upright, slanted position.
- Place baby on a soft, thin blanket on the floor while you (and siblings) join him. Move a black/white/red object slowly in front of him to encourage side-to-side head movement.
- Carry baby in a "football" hold.
- Toys should be quiet and presented slowly at this age so that baby does not get overwhelmed or frustrated.

1 to 2 Months

- Place baby on a soft, thin blanket on a firm surface with a rolled towel under baby's chest for support. Smile, laugh and stick your tongue in and out to build baby's imitation skills.
- Play games like peek-a-boo and "where's mama" while baby is on your belly. The more you play and engage with them on their tummies, the more they will associate this as a fun time with mommy and daddy.
- Babies are most interested in faces, smells and voices as their sensory system develops. Lay baby on you to see you, or put a mirror in front of them so they can see themselves.

3 to 5 Months

- Place baby over your legs, supporting his chest with your leg. Move bright toys in front of him to encourage side-to-side head movement.

- Lay baby on his belly, prop him up on his elbows and hold arms to give extra support. Talk, sing and make faces to encourage baby to stay in this position for longer periods.

6 Months and Older

- Give baby multiple opportunities for floor time each day. They need many sensory experiences and should move around freely to explore their environment. Visually stimulate baby by placing toys around to move, pivot and scoot or crawl to. Remember to place toys in front and to the sides to motivate them in all directions.
- Use colorful toys such as pictures of family members and other babies to develop baby's recognition skills. Babies love to look at faces and themselves at this stage so use a baby-safe mirror or books with faces.
- Many babies will be sitting up at this stage. Balance and coordination will increase when allowed to play in this position. Keep baby as free of bouncers, high chairs, walkers and activity gyms as possible. Baby needs to learn to transition from back to tummy, tummy to all fours, and then to sitting when not confined.

