

It's Tummy Time

Place your baby on his tummy while you spend time with him when your baby is awake and ready to play. Placing your baby on his back is the safest position for sleep, but having your baby spend time on his tummy while playing is good, too. Here are some reasons why:

- Your baby tries to lift his head and this helps the muscles in his neck, arms and body get stronger.
- Too much time on his back can give your baby flat spots on his head.
- Helps baby develop skills such as rolling, sitting, crawling and pulling to stand.

Keep your baby safe. Never leave your baby alone on their tummy. Your baby should only be placed on his tummy when awake and ready to play.

Tips to Help Baby Enjoy Tummy Time

Many babies may cry and refuse to move their head when they are first placed on their tummy for play. Here are some tips to help your baby enjoy playing on his belly.

- **It's never too early.** Have your baby spend some wake time on his tummy even as a newborn.
- **Keep it short at first.** Start out with just a few minutes at a time, several times a day. Increase the time as your baby gets used to it and begins to like it.

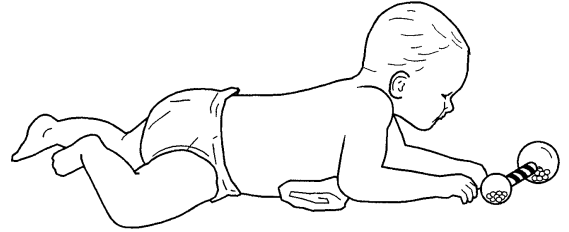


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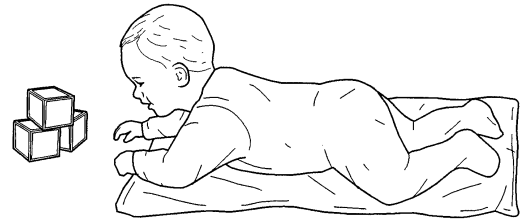
Learn more about your health care.

- **Play with your baby!** Join your baby on a firm surface such as a bed or a blanket on the floor. Talk to your baby, make silly faces, sing silly songs and cuddle up next to her so she can rest against you.

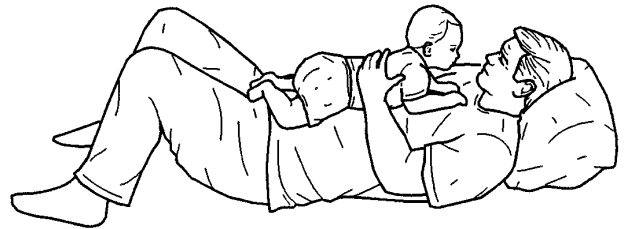
- **Place a towel roll or small pillow under your baby's chest and arms to raise him up.** This may let him move his head and arms more easily at first. Baby may find tummy time easier in a more upright, slanted position.



- **Give your baby a mirror, a rattle or your face to look at.** This will make tummy time more fun and will give your baby more to look at.



- **Hold your baby.** Lie on your back and hold your baby on your chest facing you. It's a great way to spend tummy time with your baby!



Tummy time gives your baby a new way to look at the world from her tummy instead of her back. It also helps reduce the risk of developing flat spots on the head caused by constant pressure to one side of the head. At the same time, it allows your baby to strengthen muscles that will help him learn to roll, sit and crawl. Spend some tummy time with your baby today!

- ✦ **Talk to your doctor or others on your health care team if you have questions. You may request more written information from the Library for Health Information at (614) 293-3707 or email: health-info@osu.edu.**