



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago
Ministry of Health



Importance of Tummy Time



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Maternal and Child
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January 2019.

WHAT IS TUMMY TIME?

Tummy time happens when babies spend time on their tummies while awake, alert, and supervised. While babies should always be on their backs for sleep, they should also spend some time on their tummies as they get older. Being on their tummy helps babies a few weeks to 7 months old to push up on their arms, stretch their necks, and look around. It also helps them to learn how to roll over, push up, and crawl. Be sure your baby gets some tummy time each day. Remember, do not leave a baby alone during tummy time.

What are the benefits of Tummy Time?

- Helps the baby to avoid developing flat spots on the back of their skull, a condition called positional plagiocephaly.
- Helps support normal motor development, as a baby gets more chances to work the muscles in his upper body. Tummy time helps prepare babies to slide on their tummies and crawl!



Who knew I was working on all these skills in Tummy Time...

Photo Credit: Parents.com

How to do Tummy Time?

- Avoid doing tummy time right after feeding, when baby may spit up if placed on their tummy.
- Place him on his tummy on a solid surface, such as the floor.
- Make sure the surface is clean and clear of small items that may pose choking hazards.
- Use different safe textures below the baby, such as towels or blankets.
- Start slowly (1–2 minutes), as some babies may not like tummy time at first.
- Put toys close to your baby, and move them from side to side so that the baby tries to look at them. Remember that toys need to be larger than what your baby can put in his/her mouth.
- Use picture books or musical or light-up toys so that the baby wants to reach for them.
- Put mirror out of reach but next to your baby so they can see their reflection.
- Talk and sing, stroke their back, or tickle their hands.
- **Always supervise baby during tummy time. As he or she gets stronger and starts moving more, clear away dangerous things.**

Sources

North Central Regional Health Authority, American Academy of Paediatrics