



TUMMY TIME

Why is Tummy Time Important?

Tummy time helps babies develop strong neck, shoulder, arm, and back muscles. It also prevents flat spots on the head and helps develop motor skills, such as rolling, crawling, and sitting. Even babies who don't like tummy time at first can learn to enjoy it with regular practice.

When to start Tummy Time

Tummy time can begin as soon as your baby comes home from the hospital. The earlier you start, the better, as it helps your baby get used to being on their tummy and builds strength right from the start.

How long and how often to do Tummy Time

Start with a few minutes, two to three times a day. You can slowly increase the time as your baby gets more comfortable, aiming for a total of about 30 minutes per day by the time your baby is 3 months old. It's best to do tummy time when your baby is alert, fed, and content.

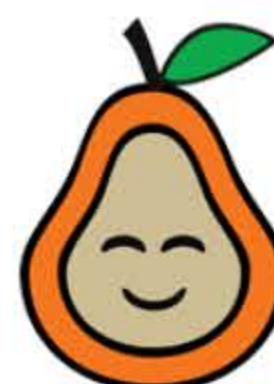
Tips to make Tummy Time Fun

- Get down to your baby's level and make eye contact.
- Say encouraging words: ***"This is hard, but you can do it!"***
- Place toys, books, or mirrors within reach to capture their attention.
- Keep tummy time short and positive—stop if your baby gets too tired or upset.
- Try singing, talking, or playing music to keep your baby entertained.

Tummy Time Safety

Always supervise your baby during tummy time. Make sure your baby is on a firm, flat surface that is safe and free from hazards.

Never leave your baby unattended, and never place your baby on their tummy to sleep. Tummy time is only for play when your baby is awake and alert.



Healthy Start

hsmm@hsmm.ca

Different Tummy Time Positions

Tummy time doesn't always have to be flat on the floor. Try these positions to help your baby build strength and comfort:

Tummy to Tummy

Lie on your back and place your baby on your chest or tummy so you are face to face. Talk or sing to keep them engaged.



Tummy on the Floor

Lay your baby on a blanket or mat on the floor with some toys or a mirror to explore.



Using a Nursing Pillow

Place your baby on their tummy over a firm nursing pillow with their arms propped in front. This gives extra support and can help babies who are not comfortable being flat on their stomach.



Tummy Across Lap

Place your baby tummy-down across your lap. Gently rub their back or talk to them for comfort.



Tummy Time in a Baby Carrier

Wearing your baby in an upright carrier while they are awake can also build their upper body and neck strength. While this isn't as good as tummy time on the floor, it's a good option



If you use a baby carrier as a tummy time variation, be sure:

- Baby is upright and facing inward.
- Baby's chin is off their chest, and their face is always visible and kissable.
- Baby's airways remain clear, and their back and head are well-supported.

"Back to sleep, tummy to play, different positions throughout the day."