



BACK to SLEEP,



TUMMY to PLAY

Understanding the Importance of Tummy Time

How much tummy time should an infant have?

What if the baby doesn't like being on their tummy?

Doesn't sleeping on the back cause a flat head?

How can I exercise a baby on their tummy?

- What are the 2 most important things to remember about safe sleep practices?
 1. Healthy babies are safest when sleeping on their backs at nighttime and during naps. Side sleeping is not as safe as back sleeping and is not advised.
 2. Tummy time is for babies who are awake and being watched. Your baby needs this to develop strong muscles.

Remember... Back to Sleep, Tummy to Play

- How much tummy time should an infant have?
 - Beginning on their first day home from the hospital or in your family child care home or center, play and interact with the baby while they are awake and on the tummy 2-3 times each day for a short period of time (3-5 minutes), increasing the amount of time as the baby shows they are enjoying the activity. A great time to do this is following a diaper change or when the baby wakes from a nap.
 - Tummy time prepares babies for the time when they will be able to slide on their bellies and crawl. As babies grow older and stronger they will need more time on their tummies to build their own strength.
- What if the baby does not like being on their tummy?
 - Some babies may not like the tummy time position at first. Place yourself or a toy in reach for them to play with. Eventually your baby will enjoy tummy time and begin to enjoy play in this position.
- Doesn't sleeping on their back cause babies to have a flat head?
 - Parents and caregivers often worry about the baby developing a flat spot on the back of the head because of sleeping on their back. Though it is possible for a baby to develop a flat spot on the head, it usually rounds out as they grow older and sit up. There are ways to reduce the risk of the baby developing a flat spot:
 1. Alternate which end of the crib you place the baby's feet. This will cause them to naturally turn towards light or objects in different positions, which will lessen the pressure on one particular spot on the head.

2. When the baby is awake, vary their position. Limit time spent in freestanding swings, bouncy chairs, and car seats. These items all put added pressure on the back of the baby's head
 3. Spend time holding the baby in your arms as well as watching them play on the floor, both on their tummy and on their back.
 4. A breastfed baby would normally change breasts during feeding; if the baby is bottle fed, switch the side that they feed on during feedings.
- How can I exercise the baby while they are on their tummy?
 - There are lots of ways to play with the baby while on their tummy.
 1. Place yourself or a toy just out of the baby's reach during playtime to get them to reach for you or the toy.
 2. Place toys in a circle around the baby. Reaching to different points in the circle will allow them to develop the appropriate muscles to roll over, scoot on their belly and crawl.
 3. Lie on your back and place the baby on your chest. The baby will lift their head and use their arms to try and see your face.
 4. While being watched by an adult or caregiver, have a young child play with the baby while on their tummy. Young children can get down on the floor easily. They generally have energy for playing with babies, may really enjoy their role as the "big kid", and are likely to have fun themselves.
 - Back to sleep, tummy to play
 - Follow these easy steps to create a safe sleep environment in your home, family child care home, or child care center.
 1. Always place babies on their backs to sleep, even for short naps.
 2. Place babies in a safety-approved crib with a firm mattress (cradles and bassinets may be used, but choose those that are JPMA (Juvenile Products Manufacturers Association) certified for safety.
<http://www.jpma.org>
 3. Remove soft, fluffy bedding and stuffed toys from the baby's sleep area.
 4. Make sure the baby's head and face remain uncovered during sleep.

5. Place the baby in a smoke-free environment.
6. Allow the baby to sleep in light clothing to avoid overheating. If a blanket is used, make sure the baby's feet are at the bottom of the crib, that the blanket comes up no higher than the baby's chest and that it is tucked in on the bottom and 2 sides of the crib. Consider using a sleep sack, or wearable blanket instead.
7. If you are working in a family child care home or center, create a written safe sleep policy to ensure that staff and families understand and practice back to sleep and SIDS risk reduction practices in child care. If you are a parent with a child in out-of-home child care. Advocate for the creation of a safe sleep policy. *Caring for Our Children National Health and Safety Performance Standards: Guidelines for Out-Of-Home Child Care Programs* outlines what should be included in the safe sleep policy. Visit <http://nrc.uchsc.edu> / to download a free copy.

- National SIDS resources

- National SIDS and Infant Death Resource Center
 - <http://www.sidscenter.org>
- Association of SIDS and Infant Mortality Programs
 - <http://asip1.org>
- First Candle/SIDS Alliance
 - <http://www.firstcandle.org>
- American Academy of Pediatrics
 - <http://aappolicy.org>
The Changing Concept of sudden Infant Death Syndrome: Diagnostic Coding Shifts, Controversies, Regarding the Sleeping Environment, and New Variables to Consider in Reducing the Risk
 - <http://aappolicy.aappublications.org/cgi/reprint/pediatrics;116/5/1245.pdf>
- Healthy Kids, Healthy Care: A Parent Friendly Tool on Health and Safety Issues in Child Care:
 - <http://www.healthykids.us>