

Tummy Time ToolsSM



Activities to Help You Position, Carry, Hold and Play with Your Baby

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Tummy Time Tools provides parents with ideas and activities to make sure your baby gets enough time on his tummy throughout the day, while he is awake and supervised. These activities include handling, carrying, diapering, positioning, feeding and playing with your baby. Increasing the amount of time your baby lies on his tummy:

- Promotes muscle development in the neck and shoulders
- Helps prevent tight neck muscles and the development of flat areas on the back of the baby's head
- Helps build the muscles your baby needs to roll, sit and crawl

Why Do Babies Need Tummy Time?

Babies need tummy time because they are spending more and more time on their backs. In the early 90s, the American Academy of Pediatrics' Back to Sleep program successfully decreased the incidence of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) in the United States by 40 percent by encouraging parents to place their babies on their backs to sleep. Around the same time, a number of infant carriers that doubled as car seats and carriers became widely used. This combination of back sleeping at night and daytime pressure on the infant's head can create a flattening of the skull.

When a baby develops flat areas on the back of the head and possibly the forehead, it's called plagiocephaly. Often, this flattening is made worse by a condition called torticollis. Torticollis is a single muscle or group of muscles that are tight or weak

on one side of the neck, causing a baby to tilt or turn to one side. The muscle fibers can shorten because of continued resting in one position.

It is very important that an infant be placed on his back to sleep. However, it is also important to a baby's development that he get supervised tummy time and constant repositioning throughout the day.

The activities in Tummy Time Tools increase your cuddle time and contact with your baby and will enhance the time you spend together. Teach these activities to family members and other caretakers, so the activities become an important part of your baby's day.

Tummy Time Is:

- Any activity that keeps your baby from lying flat in one position against a hard, supporting surface
- Anytime you carry, position or play with your baby while he is on his belly
- Beneficial to babies of all ages
- Fun, and it can be designed to be easy or challenging for your baby
- Adaptable, and changes as your baby grows and develops strength
- Always supervised—never leave your baby alone on his tummy
- A great time to bond with your baby
- More enjoyable when you play music or give your baby interesting toys to look at and play with





1 Carrying

Carrying

- 1** Alternate the hip your baby straddles to encourage looking, turning and balancing (to the right and left sides) in both directions.
- 2** Carry your baby over your shoulder. Gently support his head in a centered position. By changing the shoulder your baby is carried on, you will encourage your baby to turn to both sides. Less support is needed as your baby develops strength, as well as head and trunk control.
- 3** Hold your baby out in front and facing away from you. Gently keep his head centered.
- 4** Carry your baby belly down, with your arm supporting underneath his chest. Younger infants will need their heads and chest supported, but as your baby gains strength in the neck and trunk muscles, less support is needed.
- 5** As your baby develops strength, you can play airplane and pretend he is flying as you carry (and support) him.
- 6** Hold and carry your baby facing away from you to encourage him to watch the activities in the room by turning his head.
- 7** Carry your baby facing away from you on his right side. Switch and carry the baby on his left side.



2 Carrying



3 Carrying



4 Carrying



5 Carrying



6 Carrying



7 Carrying



Snuggle Time

Snuggle Time

Lay your baby against your shoulder facing you or gently swaddled in your arms. This is snuggle time and will encourage your baby to lift his head to look at you. Support and center the head, and turn it gently both ways.



Snuggle Time



1 Positions for Play

Positions for Play

- 1** A great way to have tummy time with your baby is to lie on your back and hold your baby on your chest facing you. This will encourage your baby to lift his head to look at you. Gently turn the baby's head to both sides. As your baby grows, less support is needed, and your baby will begin to keep his head centered and push up on his arms.
- 2** Place a pillow, small towel or blanket under the baby's chest to help your baby lift and center his head.
- 3** Play on the floor with your baby. Place toys on both sides to encourage turning of the baby's head and reaching with both hands. (By playing with your baby, you can encourage socialization/interactions with mom, dad, brothers, sisters and grandparents.)
- 4** Place your baby over your lap. Raise one of your legs higher to make it easier for him to lift his head.
- 5** Sit on the floor with your baby. Play with toys centered in the middle, then to each side.



2 Positions for Play



3 Positions for Play



4 Positions for Play



5 Positions for Play



1 Dressing and Bathing

Dressing and Bathing

Incorporate the lifting, carrying and positioning ideas found in Tummy Time Tools while you dress and bathe your baby. This increases the opportunities for tummy time and turns dressing into a fun exercise.

- 1** Towel dry and change your baby on his belly. Gently roll your baby from side to side as you apply shirt and pants.
- 2** Massage your baby from head to toe after diapering and bathing.



2 Dressing and Bathing



1 Positioning



3a Positioning



1 Diapering

Positioning

- 1 Adjust positioning so the baby can watch you with his head centered, rather than off to one side. Place the baby in your lap facing you. Sing, make eye contact, snuggle and center his head, as needed. Challenge your baby's balance to both sides by tipping his body slightly to each side. The baby will re-center his body and gain strength.
- 2 If your car seat comes equipped with a curved head support, center the baby's head within it. If your car seat does not already have a curved head support, the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends using a rolled blanket or towel, which can be placed along the side of the baby's head and shoulders while in the car seat, to keep the baby from leaning to one side and to position his head and body in the middle. (Do not place pads or cushions under or behind the baby while he is in the car seat.) Head supports can be purchased and installed for use in infant carriers and strollers only, not in car seats.
- 3 Place fun and interesting mobiles or toys equally to both sides of your baby to encourage turning to both directions while on his tummy or back. Change the side your baby lies on, even if he prefers just one side.



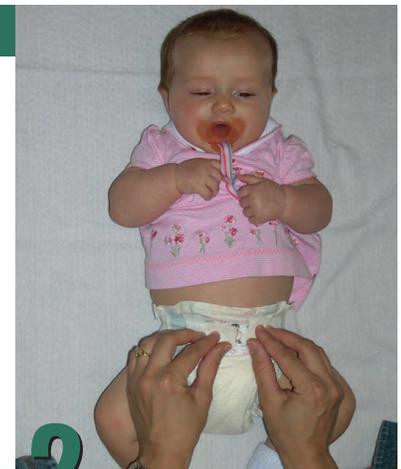
2 Positioning



3b Positioning

Diapering

- 1 Alternate the position of your baby on the changing table. Roll your baby from side to side as you fasten the diaper tabs. Talk to your baby from different sides as you change his diaper.
- 2 Change your baby's diaper on the bed or floor with your baby facing you. This encourages the head-centered position and eye contact with the caregiver.
- 3 After diaper changes, roll your baby on his belly before picking him up. While supervised, allow the baby to play in this position for a few minutes.



2 Diapering



3 Diapering



1 Feeding

Feeding

- 1** Change the arm you hold your baby in for feeding, so the baby begins to look and turn equally to both sides. This also limits the pressure of your arm on the back of your baby's head. Feed your baby in one arm, then switch to the other side for the next feeding. This will help develop neck flexibility to both sides.
- 2** Sit with your back supported and knees bent. Position your baby against your legs, facing you. Feed your baby with the head positioned in the middle. (Keep your baby's head centered during the feeding.)
- 3** Try placing your baby belly down over your lap when burping. This is a way to introduce tummy time to a young infant.
- 4** Position the baby's infant seat so he turns and looks to both sides. Spoon-feed your baby with the spoon coming in from the middle, left and right to encourage turning of the head to both sides and use of the small muscles around the lips and mouth to



2 Feeding



3 Feeding



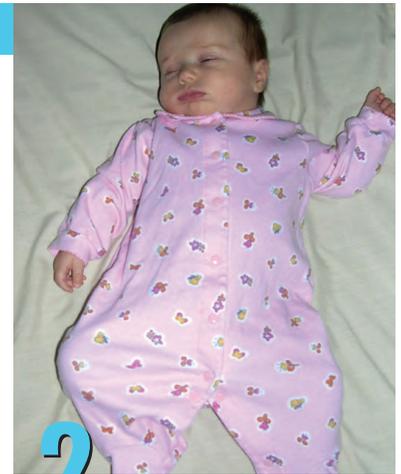
4 Feeding



1 Sleeping

Sleeping

- 1** Position your baby on his back to sleep. Place your baby at the opposite end of the crib every other night. Keep a calendar by the crib to remind you to change the baby's direction.
- 2** Turn the baby's head to the opposite side each night to keep it from developing flat spots.



2 Sleeping

Back to Sleep, Tummy to Play





1 More Activities

More Activities

- 1** Sit your baby on your lap, facing you. Provide support as needed, and encourage the baby to hold his head up and centered. Turn his head equally to both sides. Again, a good position for feeding.
- 2** Lie on the floor with your baby, face-to-face. Help your baby push up on his elbows to lift his head to look at you.
- 3** Provide support under the chest to make lifting the head in the middle easier.
- 4** Place toys in front of your baby while he is lying on his belly to encourage reaching and playing with both hands. Your baby may begin propping up on both arms and moving around the floor on his belly. Your baby may also begin to crawl from this position.
- 5** While watching TV or visiting with friends, place your baby on his tummy over your lap. Change the baby's position to encourage looking to both sides.



2 More Activities



3 More Activities



4 More Activities



5 More Activities

Other Ways to Affect Head Shape

Some infants develop flattening or asymmetry of their heads (plagiocephaly), even after a developmental program as active as this one. If your baby's head shape does not improve after 4 months of age, your pediatrician may refer you to a doctor who specializes in the skull



or suggest that you see a professional called an orthotist, who can make a custom-molded band to help shape your baby's head. This special band is called a cranial remolding orthosis. It is worn 23 hours a day and gently guides the baby's head into a more normal

Personalizing Your Baby's Program

It is important to remember that these activities can be changed to meet your baby's needs, and some babies will progress to skills sooner or later than others. Not all babies have tightness in their necks, and many have very well-shaped heads. The activities in this program can promote normal development for all babies. The time you spend on

these activities will bring you and your baby closer together.

Some babies will require additional exercises to stretch and strengthen tight or weak muscles due to torticollis. These will be provided under the guidance of your doctor, occupational or physical therapist.

Special thanks to Children's Health Care of Atlanta.



Repositioning Techniques For Your Infant

EARLY INTERVENTION FOR POSITIONAL PLAGIOCEPHALY

Positional plagiocephaly and torticollis are more commonly diagnosed in today's infants than in previous years and should be evaluated and treated by medical professionals. While many factors contribute to the development of these conditions, a decrease in severity may occur with careful and continuous attention to repositioning of the infant during both sleeping and waking times. The purpose of this flyer is to provide helpful hints in repositioning attempts to prevent positional plagiocephaly.

Evaluate your infant's head for any areas of flatness. The goal of repositioning is to encourage the infant to rest the head on the non-flat areas as well as to encourage weight distribution over all surfaces of the sides and back. Also, stretching of the neck muscles occurs by rotation of the infant's head.

If repositioning and stretching exercises are unsuccessful in promoting symmetrical head growth by four months, the infant may benefit from a cranial remolding orthosis such as a STARband™. The STARband™ is a custom molded plastic and foam orthosis that gently reshapes the infants head. It is most effective for infants 4-18 months and is available by prescription through your physician and a local orthotist.

Sleeping

- Infants should always be placed on their backs to sleep. Modify their sleeping position by placing the infant's head at opposite ends of the crib on alternate nights.
- Rearrange the furniture in the infant's nursery. Even very young infant's are attracted to a light source and will try to turn their heads toward a window.
- If your infant prefers sucking a thumb over a pacifier, encourage him/her to suck the thumb on the opposite side of head flatness by covering the hand on the side of flatness.
- After your infant has fallen asleep, move the head to the non-preferred side (i.e., away from the flattened area).

Play Time

- Supervised tummy time—The more time your infant can spend playing on his/her tummy... the better! Many infants resist this position at first but only because they are unfamiliar with it and most learn to enjoy it over time. Get down on the floor at your infant's eye level and play peek-a-boo, etc., and choose toys that are stimulating for the infant when they are on their tummy.
- Reduce the amount of time the infant spends in carseats, carriers, swings or any other device that allows the child to rest on the back of the head.
- Stretch and massage—Neck tightness (also called torticollis) should be evaluated and treated by a medical professional. Home exercises are often given to assist in the treatment process.

Feeding

- Alternate the arm in which the infant is held for both bottle and breast feeding.
- When feeding, encourage the infant to turn their head opposite the preferred side.

Changing Diapers

- Diapers can be changed from the side so that the infant is encouraged to turn the head to look at the caregiver.

Travel

- Carseats—Towels can be rolled to position the head on one side or the other, and soft foam materials can be placed underneath the cloth liner of the carseat to create additional padding for the head. Move the carseat to the side of the car that encourages the infant to turn their head toward the window and away from the side of tightness on the neck.
- Front carriers (i.e., pouches)—These allow your infant to be close to you without unnecessary forces to the head.
- Carriers (i.e., buckets)—Time spent in this type of carrier should be kept to a minimum.
- Pillows—Several companies manufacture specially designed pillows to help hold the infant's head in the preferred position.

These positioning techniques are not a substitute for medical advice. Please contact your health care provider to receive treatment and ongoing medical attention.

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Técnicas de Recolocación para su infante

La intervención temprana para la plagiocefalia de posición

La plagiocefalia de posición y la torticolis son diagnosticados más comúnmente en los infantes de hoy día que en años previos, y deberán ser evaluados y tratados por profesionales médicos. Mientras que muchos factores contribuyen al desarrollo de estas condiciones, una disminución en la severidad puede ocurrir con la atención cuidadosa y continua a la recolocación del infante durante ambos los ratos de dormir y los de descansar. El propósito de este panfleto es el proveer sugerencias de ayuda para los intentos de recolocación para prevenir la plagiocefalia de posición.

Evaluar la cabeza de su infante para ver si hay áreas planas. La meta de la recolocación es fomentar que el infante descance la cabeza sobre las áreas no planas al igual que fomentar la distribución del peso sobre todas las superficies laterales y traseras. Además, el estiramiento de los músculos del cuello ocurre con la rotación de la cabeza del infante.

Si la recolocación y el estiramiento no son exitosos en promover la simetría del crecimiento de la cabeza a los cuatro meses, el infante puede beneficiarse del uso de un ortosis de remodelamiento craneal tal como una STARband™. La STARband™ es una ortosis ligera de plástico y hule espuma hecha de una impresión en un molde que suavemente remodela la cabeza del infante. Es más efectiva en los infantes de entre 4-18 meses y está disponible por receta médica por medio de su médico y de su ortóptico local.

Dormido

- > Los infantes siempre deberán colocarse en la espalda para dormir. Modifique su posición de dormir por medio de colocar la cabeza del infante en lados opuestos de la cuna en noches alternadas.
- > Reacomode los muebles del cuarto del bebé. Aún los infantes muy jóvenes son atraídos por una fuente de luz y voltearán la cabeza hacia una ventana.
- > Si su infante prefiere chupar su dedo gordo más que un chupón, animelo a chupar el dedo gordo del lado opuesto de la parte plana de la cabeza por medio de cubrir la mano del lado de la parte plana.
- > Después de que su hijo ya se haya dormido, mueva su cabeza al lado no-preferido (v.g., lejos del área plana).

Tiempo de Juego

- > Supervise el tiempo que el infante está sobre el estómago. Mientras más tiempo su hijo puede pasar jugando sobre su estómago...¡mejor! Muchos infantes resisten esta posición al principio pero solamente porque no están acostumbrados a hacerlo y la mayoría aprenden a gozarlo con el tiempo. Bájese Ud. al piso al nivel de los ojos de su bebé y juegue a esconderse los ojos, etc., y escoja juguetes que estimulan al infante mientras está sobre el estómago.
- > Reduzca la cantidad del tiempo que el infante pasa en asientos de seguridad de automóviles, cargadores, columpios o cualquier otro aparato que permite que el niño descance sobre la parte trasera de la cabeza.
- > Estire y masajee. La tensión del cuello (también llamado torticolis) deberá ser evaluada y tratada por un profesional médico. A menudo se le dan ejercicios caseros para ayudar al proceso de tratamiento.

La Alimentación

- > Alterne el brazo sobre el cual el bebé se alimenta para ambas la alimentación por biberón y por pecho.
- > Al alimentarlo, anime al infante a voltear la cabeza al lado opuesto a el lado preferido.

El Cambio de Pañales

- > Los pañales se pueden cambiar desde el lado para que el infante se anime a voltear la cabeza para ver a quien lo cuida.

Viajar

- > Los asientos de seguridad de automóviles. Las toallas pueden enrollarse para colocar a la cabeza en un lado o en el otro lado, y materiales de hule espuma suaves pueden colocarse debajo del forro de tela del asiento de seguridad para crear acojinamiento adicional para la cabeza. Mueva el asiento de seguridad al lado del coche que anime al infante a voltear la cabeza hacia la ventana lejos del lado de la tensión del cuello.
- > Cargadores frontales (v.g., bolsillos). Estos permiten que su hijo esté cerca de usted sin fuerzas innecesarias en la cabeza.
- > Cargadores (v.g., tipo cubeta). El tiempo que se pasa en este tipo de cargadores deberá de ser mínimo.
- > Almohadas. Muchas compañías manufacturan almohadas diseñadas especialmente para ayudar a sostener a la cabeza del infante en la posición preferida.

Estas técnicas de colocación no son un sustituto para el consejo medico. Por favor póngase en contacto con su proveedor de cuidado de la salud para recibir tratamiento y atención médica continua.

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