

Should you have questions or concerns,
please do not hesitate to contact your
local Community Chartered Physiotherapist:

Currently based in:

Corduff Primary Care Centre,
Blackcourt Road,
Blanchardstown,
Dublin 15.
Tel 017956761

And

Grangegorman Primary Care Centre,
Upper Grangegorman Road,
Dublin 7.
Tel: 01 8676236



Community Physiotherapy
Department
HSE Dublin North West



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive



TUMMY
TIME
TUMMY TIME

Advice for Parents

Why tummy time?

As it is recommended that babies sleep on their backs, they are spending less time on their tummies.

This may cause:

- A delay in babies acquiring movement skills or
- flattening of the side or the back of the head

Tummy time is an important activity to promote a baby's development and should become part of each baby's daily routine.



What do babies do on their tummies?

- They achieve better head control and stronger muscles in their necks, shoulders, arms and backs.
- Babies move from side to side on their tummies which helps them learn how to reach and crawl.
- They develop better balance and co-ordination.
- Vision and hand-eye co-ordination are enhanced.

Tummy time for fun!

A good time for tummy time is when the baby wakes up or after a nappy change.

You can start by placing the new born baby on your chest while you are lying on your back or sitting reclined. Hold the baby facing you. This is a great way to play with the baby while they try to lift their head to see your face.



Not all babies like going on their tummy at first and may cry. Place mirrors, brightly coloured objects and musical or moving toys nearby to encourage baby to lift their head.

As your baby grows older (approx. 6 months) try placing favourite toys just out of reach and encourage the baby to reach for them. This helps him/her strengthen the muscles needed for rolling over.

Playtime

Too much time in equipment such as swings, bouncer seats and car seats gives babies limited visual stimulation and less opportunities for exploring. Instead place your baby on his/her tummy on a mat on the floor to allow them to move freely themselves.

- ❑ **Make sure your baby is awake and is never left alone on his/her tummy.**
- ❑ **Always place your baby on a firm, surface. Avoid bean bags or very padded furniture.**
- ❑ **It is important to begin tummy from birth.**
- ❑ **It is recommended for babies to have tummy time about 3 times per day for 3-5 minutes and slowly build up to longer sessions.**



Back to sleep & tummy to play

Always place a baby to sleep on their back – even for naps.

When placing your baby down to sleep, position the head first (either to right or left) so that the cheek rests on the mattress, then gently allow the baby's body to roll completely onto its back. Alternate the side of the head each time you put the baby down so that an equal amount of time is spent facing right and left. If you like your baby to be facing towards you, alternate which end of the cot you place the baby's head.