

Tummy time

Play builds healthy bodies and healthy minds, so it's important for your baby's development that they have time in the day for playing. Playing looks a little bit different for babies than it does for children, your baby plays by using their sense to interact with you and by moving their bodies. One of the ways babies play is through tummy time.

Your baby needs tummy time right from birth, according to guidelines from Alberta Health Services your baby should be getting 30 minutes of supervised tummy time a day, spread out over the course of the day. One of the best ways to do this is to provide short periods of tummy time throughout the day when your baby is awake.

Tummy time helps your baby's development and makes their body stronger so they'll be able to roll, sit and crawl. It also strengthens their neck muscles and can prevent flat spots on their head from developing.

Some ideas on how you can integrate tummy time into your routine with your baby are:

- Start slowly! It's normal that your baby will fuss in tummy time at first, so try for just 1-2 minutes at a time to start. As they get more comfortable you can start to stretch this time out
- Don't do tummy time when your baby is hungry, tired or upset, but try to make it a part of your daily routine, maybe try putting your baby in tummy time after every diaper change
- Combine tummy time with skin to skin cuddling. Lay your baby on their tummy on top of your chest. Your baby will really love being close to you in this position!
- You can put a small rolled up towel under your baby's chest to help support them to hold their head up and look around
- Get down on the floor with your baby and talk to them while they are in tummy time, or use bright objects and toys that they enjoy looking at