

Tummy Time

You should know by now after everything we read that you should not put your baby to sleep on their tummies, but you should do it when they are awake in order to develop their strength, resistance and coordination. They also practice dragging movements for future crawling.

Since the American Academy of Pediatrics recommended that babies should sleep on their backs to reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), many parents don't let their babies to be on their tummies even for play time. This caused some babies not being able to hold and turn their heads as soon as they should do it, and even worst, skip the crawling stage, so important in their development (the effort they do with their arms to drag themselves has a very important role on their hands use later).

When they do tummy time they are exercising and using neck, arms and hands muscles. That is why it is so important to get them used to that position as soon as possible. Once they turn one month you can start doing simple exercises. Once they can hold their heads without help (close to three months) it is advisable to put them on their tummies more often. At the beginning some of them won't like this position. Don't worry about that, they will learn this ability and then it will be fun for them.

1 to 2 months

Lay down babies on their tummy. It is possible that they get mad a little bit (they don't like to be in this position at the beginning). If they don't show interest on holding their heads up, we need to stimulate them touching their backs very gently.



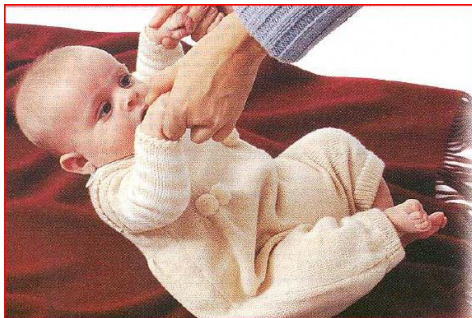


To help them lift their heads, we can use a rolled towel under their chests or even better is to balance them on an inflatable tube, holding them with extra care. They will enjoy this exercise much more than the previous one.

We lay down with the baby on top of us holding them with both hands. This way they feel obligated to lift their heads up to see us. This position is also good to calm colics.



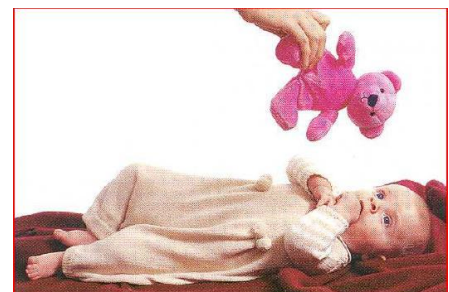
3 to 4 months



Now they have more strength on their backs and they have developed their head control when they are lying down. If we lay them down face up on a blanket and we grab their hands as if we were going to lift them, they will lift their heads anticipating our movement.

It will take them time but with our help they will turn and know how fun it is to roll.

In this exercise babies continue facing up. If we show them an interesting toy on one side, they will turn to see it better.





If we bring closer the toy to their body, they will stretch their arms to grab it. This is how they exercise their upper body muscles.

7 to 8 months

At this age they support themselves on their tummies perfectly. We show them toys to their right and left so they turn their neck to both sides. You can also do this exercise with the baby sitting up (the goal is that they turn only their heads and not all their bodies).

