



# Tummy Time

## Helping Hands Tip Sheet



### Did you know?

Tummy time helps with building upper body strength and balance.

Tummy time helps the development of motor skills.

Tummy time is "free play" time for infants.

### Frequency:



It is recommended that tummy time can be offered several times a day when the baby is awake. The length of time can be as short as 1 minute to as long as the baby is interested.



### Brain Development:

Since implementing "back to sleep", researchers have found that tummy time supports the development of motor skills. Motor skills give babies the ability to begin to explore the world around them. This leads to interest in later learning such as math, reading and writing.

### Tips for starting tummy time:

- Start with laying the baby on your chest or across your lap and talking to him/her.
- Make sure you lay the baby on a flat, clean surface, such as a blanket or play mat on the floor. If the baby cries, try repositioning the baby.
- Join the baby on the floor and get face to face. Talk with him/her, make silly noises and face expressions, or sing songs. Interesting activities can help them stay on their tummy longer.
- Hold a mirror or reachable toys in front of the baby to capture his/her attention. There are many tummy time toys that can keep the baby from getting bored.
- Place the baby within sight of another infant who is also enjoying tummy time.
- Keep the sessions short to start with. As soon as the baby loses interest, or begins to cry, end the tummy time session and try again later.
- Several short sessions per day may increase the baby's interest.



### Safety Tip:

Tummy time should only be enjoyed by babies when they're awake and should be always supervised. **Remember** that babies should never be allowed to sleep on their tummies, as this increases the risk of SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome). Make sure babies are put to sleep on a firm surface with no loose items such as stuffed animals or thick blankets.