

# Children's Therapy and Family Resource Centre

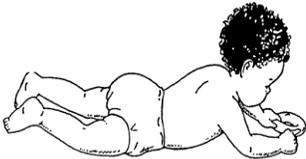
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## Why is Tummy Time Important?

**Body and Brain development:** At birth a baby has billions of disorganized neurons. These neurons make connections as the baby grows and explores his/her environment. Tummy time is the best position for a baby to explore their environment, as they can touch and feel their surroundings, therefore organizing their nervous system. This is also the easiest position for a baby to learn to move. If a baby were to spend all their time on their back, they would become easily frustrated, because they are not able to move into different positions.

**Prevent flat head shape:** If babies spend all their time in one position they are at risk of developing a flat spot across the back of their head. By frequently changing positions this may be prevented. A variety of positions also allows for optimal muscle development.

**Stronger babies:** By spending time on their tummies babies develop strength through their neck, back and tummy. The neck and back muscles are important for head control, which is needed to chew solid food and begging to produce sounds with the mouth.



A strong back and tummy is important for sitting and later talking, running and jumping.

Tummy time also develops the muscles of the arms and shoulder girdle, important for creeping, crawling and hand use.

**Balance and Coordination:** When a baby spends time on their tummy, they learn to shift their weight by reaching and eventually learn to roll over. This allows the baby to use both sides of the body and brain, which increases balance and coordination. Balance and coordination are the foundation for all motor skills.

**Eye-hand coordination:** When on their tummy a baby has easy access to their hands and face. They can also get their hands together easily, which will develop hand-eye coordination.

**Calming:** Most babies are comforted by nestling their arms and legs in close to their bodies. This is easily achieved while on their tummy.

**Confidence and independence:** Babies are able to use their hands and eventually assume other positions while on their tummy. These positions include rolling, side lying sitting and crawling. As a result they are motivated and confident with their movement and begin to move more and more.