

# WHAT IS TUMMY TIME?

*So your baby is 3 months old, congratulations!*

Over the Next 2 months, your baby will be working hard towards developing head and body control as they transition to supported upright positions

While tummy time should begin at early infancy, this flyer will focus on **3 to 4 month old** babies. We will explore different positions and activities for you to do with your child to encourage their **overall health and well-being**. Tummy time can enhance development of **motor, cognitive, socioemotional, and speech/language skills!**

## How do I incorporate Tummy Time into my baby's day?

The World Health Organization recommends 30 minutes of supervised tummy time a day, but your baby may not tolerate this right away.

- Start with 3-5 minute bouts throughout the day
- Always supervise your baby
- Pay attention to when your baby starts to get tired and change positions

## Why is Tummy Time so Important?

Tummy time aids in the development of skills that will be needed for sitting, crawling, and walking! Tummy time helps with:

- Proper head shape development
- Strengthening neck muscles important for lifting up the head
- Supporting the baby's weight through their arms in preparation for crawling
- Strengthening the baby's trunk muscles to lift themselves higher and rely less on their arms



## Reach, Grasp, and Shake!

Around 3-4 months, your baby will start to shift their weight onto one forearm, allowing for the ability to play while in this position!

## Tummy Time Activity

- Place toys of various shapes, sizes, and textures around your baby
- Your baby will begin to use their newly available arm to reach, grasp, and shake their toys
- Using their hands will help **deepen fine motor skills** and provide the foundation for lifelong skills, like teeth brushing or eating with a utensil!

### Variety is Key!

Providing your baby with a variety of toys and objects to play with is not only fun, but can also teach them about the world around them.

For example, as a baby watches a toy roll across them, they are **strengthening** the muscles they use for posture and eye movement, as well as improving **visual tracking**, a skill we use daily to interact with our environment.

### Tummy Time Activity:

- Surround your baby with toys and objects that can roll across a flat surface, such as a ball or truck
- Roll the object in front of your baby from side to side
- Allow your baby to interact with the object, so they can try to roll the object just like you!

### Evolving Emotion

Social and emotional development is critical for your baby to have a good **sense of self and relationships with others**

At 3 months you can expect your child to:

- Develop need for routine
- Learn how to calm themselves or respond to calming from the parent
- Make responsive facial expressions

At 4 months you can expect your child to:

- Attempt to vocalize emotions
- Begin learning to manipulate their environment

### Tummy Time Activity

Interact with your baby during tummy time to develop a strong bond and ensure healthy social and emotional development!

- Make friendly faces at them
- Respond to any faces your baby makes
- Talk to your baby and let them try to sound their emotions to you

### Let's Talk!

By 3-4 months of age, you can expect your baby to:

- Coo, make gurgling sounds, and babble
- Cry differently based on their needs
- Notice sounds, imitate sounds, and turn their head toward a voice or sound
- Show an interest in faces

### Tummy Time Activity

- Place toys with different faces or sounds around your baby- they will begin to **orient themselves to the toy once they hear the sound** it makes
- Lay in front of your baby and talk to them to keep them engaged

For more suggestions on incorporating tummy time into your baby's day, check out the American Occupational Therapy Association website:

<https://www.aota.org/about-occupational-therapy/patients-clients/childrenandyouth/tummy-time.aspx>

### References:

- Baby Milestones: 0-3 Month Developmental Milestones. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://pathways.org/growth-development/0-3-months/milestones/>
- Barger, E. (n.d.). Tummy-Time Activities. Retrieved May 23, 2020, from <https://www.parents.com/baby/development/physical/tummy-time-activities/>
- Deblois, M., Dufour, F., and Juneau, C., (2008). The journey of movement: the motor development from birth to 18 months of age. Institut de réadaptations en déficience physique de Québec.
- Hewitt, L., Kerr, E., Stanley, R. M., & Okely, A. D. (2020). Tummy Time and Infant Health Outcomes: A Systematic Review. *Pediatrics*, 145(6), 1-27. doi:10.1542/peds.2019-2168
- Hewitt, L., Stanley, R. M., Cliff, D., & Okely, A. D. (2019). Objective measurement of tummy time in infants (0-6 months): A validation study. *PloS one*, 14(2), e0210977. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0210977>
- Important Milestones: Your Baby By Four Months. (2019, October 24). Retrieved May 23, 2020, from <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones/milestones-4mo.html>
- Malik F, Marwaha R. Developmental Stages of Social Emotional Development In Children. [Updated 2020 Mar 30]. In: StatPearls [Internet]. Treasure Island (FL): StatPearls Publishing; 2020 Jan-. Available from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK534819/>
- Medlineplus.gov. 2020. Developmental Milestones Record - 4 Months: Medlineplus Medical Encyclopedia. [online] Available at: <https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002007.htm> [Accessed 23 May 2020]
- Rauh, S. (2008, May 12). Timeline of Child Milestones, Development Stages, & Signs of Developmental Delays. Retrieved from <https://www.webmd.com/parenting/baby/features/is-your-baby-on-track#1>
- MBI/ Alamy Stock Photo. (2019). Baby enjoying tummy time. [Digital image]. Retrieved May 28, 2020, from <https://www.pregnancybirthbaby.org.au/tummy-time>