

# Dad Central



## Tummy Time: *"There's a Dad for that!"*

### "What is tummy time?"

Tummy time is when your baby plays on his or her tummy while awake and supervised. **Your baby should always sleep on their back.** Tummy time can start any time after your baby is born. It's a great opportunity to play with and respond to your baby, this is called serve and return and is critical for strong brain development.



### "Why do tummy time?"

- It helps your baby socialize, and allows you and your baby to bond. Some babies love to be on their tummies, it can calm or even excite them.
- It builds stronger muscles (for both of you!) so she can learn to roll, sit, crawl and run with you.
- It stimulates your baby and helps build the foundation for a strong brain.
- It allows your baby to look around at different things and helps develop hand-eye coordination.
- It decreases the chances of your baby's head developing flat spots.
- It is a fun activity for both of you!
- Tummy time is more successful if baby is happy and calm and doesn't have a full tummy. If baby gets upset during tummy time, pick baby up and cuddle. Try it again later. It takes multiple times to build a brain pathway for this new skill.
- Practice is the best way to learn a new skill. Try putting baby on his tummy on the floor after every diaper change while you clean up.



Adapted from Tummy Time with Your Baby, Alberta Health Services, 2016

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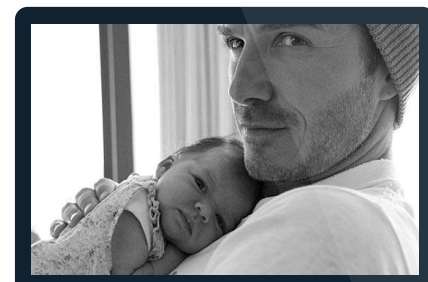
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## 3 easy ways to do tummy time

### On Dad's chest

Lay baby on their tummy on your chest while you are sitting and awake. As baby grows older and stronger, lean back in your chair, until you are reclined. You could also lie down with baby on top of your chest. Make faces, sing songs, blow bubbles, baby will love it.



### Carrying baby over Dad's arm

Place baby's head on your elbow with baby's tummy on your forearm, baby's legs dangling on either side of your hand. Keep your other hand on top of babies back till you get the hang of this position. This works best with younger babies. It is also a good "carry" for fussy or gassy babies.

### On the floor with Dad

Roll up a small towel and place it under your baby's chest, placing her arms in front of the towel. This will make it easier for her to hold her head up. Put your face or a toy in front of her and talk to her, play with her. As he gets older and stronger you can remove the rolled towel and let him lie flat on the floor, lifting up his head and shoulders with his arm and body strength.



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