

# Newborn Moves

**“You can put me on my tummy from the time I am born.”**

**“Stay and watch me when I am on my tummy.”**



**“Lying me on my tummy will help me develop the muscles that I need to control my head, reach out, roll and move around.”**

**“Lying on my tummy will help prevent my head from flattening.”**



**“A rolled towel under my chest helps me to lift my head.”**

**“It is safe for me to be on my tummy when I am awake and you are with me.”**

**Back to sleep, Tummy to play**

## Facilitator note.

The *Newborn Moves Fact Sheet* has been developed to use with families with babies 0-6 months. It is important to read out all of the information on this fact sheet to parents and carers. This will help to improve their knowledge and awareness regarding age appropriate play activities for their baby.

### Introduction

You can help your child learn to move from birth. Even before your child can walk or talk, giving your baby the chance to move will help them learn and grow.

There are lots of ways your baby can move and be active. This is called 'active play'. I would like to talk about ways you can be active with your baby.

### What is active play?

Letting your baby move freely and not be restricted by wraps or blankets is active play. It may include your baby moving an arm or leg, or moving around on their tummy and can take place indoors or outdoors. For older children, active play may be rolling a ball or running and jumping in the park.

### An important part of active play for newborn babies is spending time on their tummy every day.

Your baby spends lots of time on their back sleeping, feeding, in the car, in the stroller and during nappy changes.

#### It is important that your baby spends time on their tummy as this will help:

- your baby develop strong neck, shoulder and back muscles
- your baby control their head, reach out, roll and move around
- prevent your baby developing a flat head
- prepare your baby for crawling.

#### You can give your baby time on their tummy:

- from birth as long as they are awake
- following a nappy change
- after they have woken from a nap or after burping
- anytime your baby is alert and happy.

## Facilitator note.

Refer to the pictures on the front of this fact sheet and the *Newborn Moves Poster* when speaking to parents and carers about the points below.

#### You can help your baby play on their tummy.

- Lay your baby on their tummy on a blanket or mat with a couple of toys.
- If your baby's head drops to the floor watch and wait for 1-2 seconds. Your baby will probably turn their head to the side so they can breathe.
- A rolled up towel placed under the chest will help to balance your baby's weight and make it easier for them to lift their head. Keep their arms over and in front of the towel.

### Remember always stay with your baby when they are on their tummy.

#### Helpful hints

- Start for short periods of time and slowly increase the time your baby spends on their tummy as they grow. This can be from 10 seconds to 10 minutes.
- Place a toy in front of your baby to look at, reach for and play with.
- If your baby isn't happy on the floor, lay them on your chest. Your baby will enjoy being close to you and looking into your face while still being on their tummy.
- Your baby is only little and will tire easily. Look for tired signs (head down, rubbing eyes, yawning). Stop and give your baby a rest.
- Check your baby is not hungry or tired before starting to play.
- Lay your baby on a towel or blanket in case they bring up a little milk.

## Facilitator note.

Finish your session by reading out the following key safety messages.

#### Remember:

- There is a connection between babies sleeping on their tummies and SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome).
- Always supervise your baby when they are playing on their tummy.
- If your baby falls asleep on their tummy immediately roll them onto their back.

Back to sleep, Tummy to play