

DESCRIPTION

Tummy Time is a unique program that was developed by one of our program directors, Lisa M. Connors, M.S., CCC-SLP to address both motor skill development for babies as well as improving outcomes for oral and facial development.

If the tongue is functioning properly and in co-ordination with the jaw and cheek muscles, they all hold the mouth closed at rest. This mouth-closed position means that your child is a nose-breather rather than a mouth-breather. Overall healthy development begins in the mouth! All of this comes with several direct benefits for life:

- Safe swallowing of age expected textures
- Reduced illnesses
- Reduced risk of allergies and asthma
- Better sleep quality
- Proper formation of the dental arch



Isn't Tummy Time enough?

Actually, it's not!

In our modern world, we appreciate the importance of exercise to keep our muscles strong and toned, and indeed their importance to our health long term. However, we have also completely forgotten to exercise the muscles of the face. It is almost like we have forgotten that we have muscles in our faces!

And our babies are having less and less opportunity to exercise their facial, mouth and tongue muscles properly.

The reason to start doing oral play with your baby is not just to help them chew; it is to develop the muscles of the face and, importantly, to make sure they learn how to swallow safely.

"Multisensory experiences help deepen learning and memory, especially when paired with movement."

- Gill Connell

TUMMY TIME +

Individual & Group Classes

at



Program Structure

- Ages: Birth - 1.5 years old
- 3:1 therapist-to-family ratio
- 1:1 support is provided to assist in facilitation of each baby's unique goals



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BIRTH-1.5 YEAR-OLD PROGRAM

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Tummy Time at home...

- **Wait for your baby to be alert**
 - A happy baby will be much more cooperative than one who is tired or hungry.
- **Begin with short sessions of Tummy Time**
 - Starting tummy time sessions at a few seconds can help them get used to being belly down, especially if you have a fussy child.
- **Use toys and motivators to grab your baby's attention**
 - Pick toys that are visually appealing and have fun effects like lights to hold your baby's attention.
- **Get the family involved!**
 - Family members can be great motivators too! Let them get down on the floor with baby to encourage play in this new position!
- **Try laying baby on their side**
 - If your baby refuses to lay on their stomach without getting upset, you can ease into tummy time by placing the child on their side.

Why is Tummy Time so important?

Tummy time is an incredible tool for promoting a child's physical and cognitive development. Many parents choose to lay their child on their chest or lap during this time. It can be both a beautiful bonding experience and a way to enhance a baby's health.

Since the best sleep position for babies is on their backs, they rarely get to spend time on their stomachs. Setting aside a few minutes to flip your infant over helps them build muscles and move around in new ways.

Time spent laying on their bellies is helpful for meeting developmental milestones for infants. Learn more about the importance of tummy time and the major benefits for your baby.

How will this help my baby's development?

Tummy time is highly beneficial for infant development. Taking a few minutes every day to get your baby off their back is essential for their physical and cognitive health.

The muscles that babies exercise during tummy time help build strength in the following areas of the body:

- Neck
- Shoulders
- Back
- Arms



This time also promotes trunk stability and improves head control for infants, leading to further physical development. A baby can start rolling over and sitting up on its own after months of daily tummy time.

Spending a few minutes on their bellies can encourage infants to practice movements like reaching and pivoting. These are important precursors to crawling and being more mobile.

Since a lack of tummy time can actually delay a child's development, it is essential to practice physical skills daily.

5 Benefits of Tummy Time

1 Helps to develop your child's motor skills

Tummy time can assist with the development of motor skills in children. Regularly placing your baby on their stomach promotes the practice of important movements that eventually lead to crawling and walking.

The following are essential motor skills that tummy time can help babies develop:

- Pushing up
- Rolling over
- Sitting up
- Pulling to a stand

2 Reduces the changes of skull deformity

Because babies do not have the neck strength to lift their heads during the first few months of life, their skulls can begin flattening in the back. When this causes deformity of the head, it is called [positional plagiocephaly](#).

Time on their stomach can help decrease the chances of skull deformity in infants.

3 Promotes sensory development

Changing their perspective by placing them on their stomach can help develop their vestibular system. Being on their belly is a new sensation and requires balance. They see and feel the world in a new way while also learning how their body moves.

4 Increases cognitive development

Tummy time can help increase cognitive development in children. It stimulates awareness of the environment around them, and they see the world from a new perspective. This makes their brain process differently and create new connections. As children get older, they slowly learn how to reason and explore. Tummy time can enhance this growth.

5 Improves head control and strengthens head and neck muscles

As babies practice using their neck and shoulders to lift their head off the ground, they slowly improve their head control and make it possible to hold their heads up independently.