

Physiotherapy Advice

Gross Motor Activities

Tummy playtime

Aim: To Promote/Encourage Weight-bearing through arms, strengthening neck, shoulder and back muscles to maintain/improve head control & trunk control.

Equipment: Pillow/rolled up towel if required

What to do:

- 1: Ensure area is clear of other obstacles
- 2: Place pillow/towel on the floor if using
- 3: Assist child onto their tummy on pillow so that head/shoulders are raised and forearms/hands are resting over the edge of the pillow/towel
- 4: Encourage child to place hands flat on the floor providing assistance as needed. Use 'pair of hands' as a visual cue as required
- 5: Encourage child to keep head up
- 6: Place toys on floor, encourage kids to play/engage with toys. This can include if your child is able lift one arm off the floor to play with the toys or for some children moving the toys and getting your child to follow the direction of movement.
- 7: Try to encourage child to stay on their tummy for as long as possible or for up to 10 minutes

Variations:

- For some children, being on their tummy is quite a challenging position to be in and provides a great opportunity to work on their head control and also their shoulder stability
- Use child's own cuddly toy, make up a story about the toy walking from side-to-side and then jumping/flying up into the sky
- Encourage child to reach for toys using one hand then the other hand to practise taking weight through one arm at a time
- Consider hiding toys under towels, encourage your child to turn head to 'find' toys as you remove towels one at a time

IMPORTANT NOTE

Encouraging gross motor skills requires a safe, open play space and adult supervision at all times. Helping a child succeed in gross motor tasks requires patience and opportunities for a child to practise desired skills.

Remember, each child is an individual and children develop at different rates. You know your child best so ensure the activity is aimed at an appropriate level for him/her and provide supervision/assistance at all times.