

# EARLY MOVES

“There are lots of ways you can put me on my tummy every day.”

PARENTS/CARERS WITH BABIES: 0 - 6 MONTHS

## Carrying me

“This is a nice way to carry me to help me look around and make my neck muscles strong.”



## Lying across your lap

“Talk and sing to me or give me a toy and play with me.”



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

## Playtime on the floor

“I love to watch your face so lie me on my side, get down on my level, talk and sing to me or give me a toy and play with me.”



“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 *Early Moves Fact Sheet* has been developed to use with parents/carers 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

For healthy development your baby should be involved in active play every day. As your baby grows older, they may be awake for longer and have more time to spend in active play. There are lots of ways that you can help your baby to play and be active.

## Facilitator note

Refer to the pictures on the front of this fact sheet when speaking to parents and carers about different ways they can help their baby spend time on their tummy.

### TUMMY IDEAS

There are lots of opportunities for your baby to spend time on their tummy every day that will help them be active.

- Carry your baby in different ways. A good way to carry your baby is to roll them onto their tummy, pick them up and carry them face down on your forearm. You can do this following a nappy change or a sleep.

- Another way to carry your baby that will work their neck, back and shoulder muscles is over your shoulder. Try to remember to change shoulders each time you do this.
- Lay your baby across your lap when you are sitting down. Hold a toy in front of your baby. They will work to control their head as they look up at the toy and the world around them.

### ACTIVE PLAY IDEAS

Babies enjoy and need to be with people to help them develop. It is important that you spend time with your baby to talk, sing and play with them.

- Place your baby on their tummy on a mat or blanket. Put toys where they can see and reach for them. Try a small rubber ring or rattle with a handle, a soft doll or a board book with pictures.
- Lay your baby on their side with some toys placed nearby that they can reach for. Place a rolled up towel behind them as support. Stay near your baby and help them play on their side. Remember to lay your baby on both sides to play.
- Sit your baby on your lap and gently rock backwards and forwards or side to side. The gentle

rocking and swaying will help your baby practice their balance. This is fun to do to while singing or to music.

- Help develop eye strength by moving an object in and out or from side to side to focus on, and follow with their eyes.
- Another fun activity is to shake a rattle to the side to see if they can find it, then move and shake it on the other side and see if they can find it. If you don't have a rattle you can gently clap your hands or click your fingers.
- Lay your baby on a towel or blanket and let them kick and move about freely without a nappy or clothes. Talk, sing songs or blow raspberries on their feet.

### HELPFUL HINTS

- Check toys regularly. Little things that come loose can easily choke a baby.
- Give your baby toys and objects that have different textures to touch or squeeze or shapes for their little fingers to explore. Make sure these are safe to put in their mouth.
- Give your baby toys that make gentle sounds such as a rattle. Noises during play help with brain development and movement.

- Allow your baby plenty of time to play with toys they have worked hard to get.
- You can help your baby be active every day following daily care routines such as a nappy change, after a sleep and burping.
- Your baby may start to play for short times on their own but still needs you close to help them explore, try out new activities safely, and share in their fun.
- You are the most important thing in your baby's life. Your baby will enjoy being with you.

## 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.