

### **To encourage sitting**

To encourage learning to sit up, sit your baby between your legs and rest her hands on your knees.



Then progress to the other positions as she begins to hold herself up. Encourage her to reach forwards for a toy to stop arching of the spine and overbalancing backwards.



**If you have any concerns about your baby's development, please contact your Health Visitor or GP.**



The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy is the professional, educational and trade union body for the UK's 50,000 chartered physiotherapists, physiotherapy students and associates

APCP

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**This leaflet has been produced after an initial review of literature and where there is a lack of evidence, a consensus of expert opinion is agreed, correct at time of publication**



Association of Paediatric Chartered  
Physiotherapists

## Promoting Physical Development Lying to Sitting

Information for Parents and Carers



**All babies develop at different rates, however the information in this leaflet is intended to provide some useful guidance on positions that may help the development of posture and movement. You can use some of the activities suggested below to help promote physical development.**

**To encourage tummy time and develop shoulder strength and head control**

It is important for babies to sleep on their backs, but when they are awake it is recommended to get your baby used to being on their tummy. A good way to start is whilst you are relaxing, sitting comfortably on a chair or a bed, lay your child face down on your chest. Encourage her to lift her head to look at you. From this position you can slowly build up to propping on her elbows to take some weight through her arms. This is a nice position to use to talk to your baby or sing to her.



You could also try lying her on her tummy with a rolled towel under her chest. Encourage her to take her weight on her elbows. Progress to offering her a toy so that she will transfer her weight and reach out with one hand whilst taking the weight on the other. Weight bearing through the shoulders stimulates all the muscles to work together and provides shoulder strength and stability which is important for later development of skills such as crawling and even writing.



Once they are comfortable with the suggestions above, you can try this position which is very helpful to encourage your baby to take the weight through her arms.

**To develop midline control**

From very early on you can lay your baby on your knees as shown. When she is relaxed, place her head in the middle, make eye contact and bring her hands together. Take her hands to her feet and encourage her to touch them and play with her toes. Always take the left foot to right hand and vice versa.



You can also play pat-a-cake or offer her a toy, place the toy in the middle to allow her to reach forwards. You may need to help the movement by bringing her arms forwards from the shoulders or elbows.

This position is also a really good opportunity for practicing early communication with your baby, such as singing and mimicking facial expressions. Copy noises she makes and leave a gap for her to 'reply'.

Encouraging your baby to spend some time on her side for play also encourages use of different muscles and balance needed for later development. Roll her on her side using the rolling method below with a rolled up towel or cushion behind her back. Encourage her to reach out for a toy placed level with her tummy to avoid arching backwards if the toy is too close to eye level.



**To teach rolling from back to front**

Bend one leg up and encourage her to roll by gentle pressure on her hip as shown. Wait for her to then bring over her shoulder and head



Figure 1

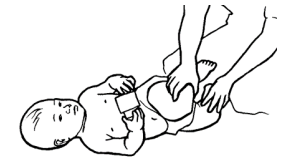


Figure 2

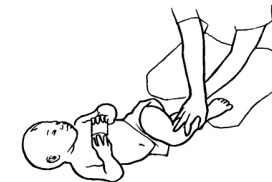


Figure 3

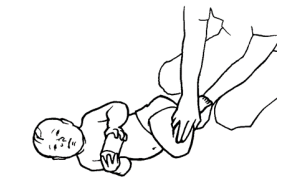


Figure 4

**To teach rolling from front to back**

Place one arm under your baby and gently lift the opposite hip. Encourage the roll by offering a toy so that she turns her head and trunk and rolls onto her back.