

Gross motor skill information for children with developmental delay

Activities to develop lying on the back (supine)

Ideas and advice for parents and carers

General information

- Movement skills learned in lying are the building blocks of more complex movements such as sitting, standing and walking.
- Use only the positions your child is ready to use.
- A “little and often” approach works well for harder positions such as tummy-lying, but make sure your child has plenty of time in between where they are lying in an easier position.
- Use activities and toys which are appropriate for your child’s developmental age.

Younger babies like black and white or contrasting colours, mirrors, faces and rattles.



Older babies like noisy toys, light and sound toys and rattles.



Supine (lying on the back)

- The first position children learn to control is lying on their back.
- This is important because your child has a lot of support while they learn to move their head, arms and legs and develop more co-ordinated movements.
- As your child learns to lift their head, arms and legs up, they are developing their muscle control.

Sequence

- Head to midline
- Hands to midline
- Lifting arms
- Lifting legs
- Lifting arms and legs together

Early development – head and hands to midline

Position

- Reclined lying (picture)
- Support head / shoulders on pillow

Encourage

- Head in middle
- Arms forward
- Hands together

Play ideas

- Toys / people in midline
- Watching toys move side to side
- Bracelets / toys on child's feet / hands



- Eye contact / interaction - making faces / singing / clapping

Lifting arms or legs

Position

- Rolled up towel under shoulders/ head to bring shoulders forward
- Rolled up towel under knees

Encourage

- Head turning to each side
- Lifting arms and legs from floor
- Kicking legs / reaching for knees (see picture)

Play ideas

- Reaching for toys above and to sides
- Play gym with hands and feet
- Toys / bright socks etc on feet



Lifting arms and legs together

Position

- Body flat on floor, pillow under head if required

Encourage

- Lifting head from floor
- Head turning to each side
- Kicking legs / reaching for feet
- Lifting bottom up from floor (see picture)

Play ideas

- Reaching for toys
- Play gym
- Toys / bright socks etc on feet



Songs

- "This little piggy"
- "Head, shoulders, knees and toes"
- "Wind a bobbin" (with hands or feet)

Side-lying

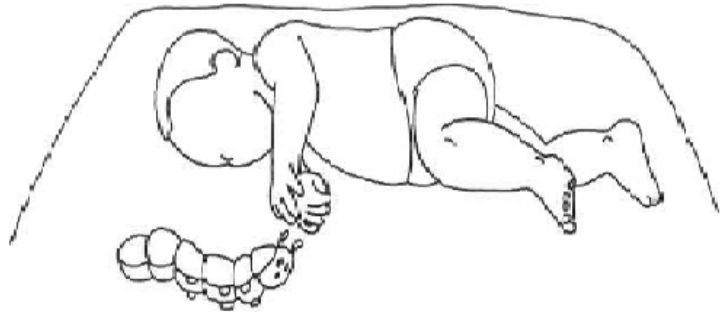
- Side-lying helps your child to bring their arms and legs together.
- They may find it easier to focus on and play with toys in midline.
- It helps your child feel the movements needed for learning to roll.

Position

- Small cushion under top knee to support leg

Encourage

- Shoulders forwards
- Hands together
- Bend top leg to help balance
- Place bottom leg straighter



Play ideas

- Toys in both hands
- Rattles, bells
- Dangle toys from above
- Mirror

Rolling

Rolling front to back often comes before back to front

- Support your child at the hips.
- Slowly guide your child over to one side from their hips.
- Help them move their arm so it isn't stuck under them.

Rolling back to front (see picture)

- Elbow tucked in to side in the direction they will roll.
- Place toys to that side to encourage head turn.
- Hold child's opposite leg with the hip and knee bent and slowly guide on to their side. Give your child time to join in.
- Continue guiding them on to their tummy. You may need to give a little lift at the shoulder they are lying on to help them roll all the way.



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