

Improve Head Control Without Tummy Time (5 Highly Effective Alternatives)

5 MIN • YOUTUBE • [HTTPS://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?V=SY5N9Z5Q6PM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SY5N9Z5Q6PM)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sy5N9Z5Q6PM>

SUMMARY

The video discusses alternative methods to promote neck strength and head control in newborns who dislike tummy time. It emphasizes various activities that can help develop these skills, making tummy time more enjoyable for the baby in the future.

- Tummy time is essential for healthy development, but some babies resist it.*
- Rolling babies onto their side before picking them up helps engage neck muscles.*
- Alternate the side when rolling to ensure balanced development.*
- Side-lying play encourages neck strength and tummy muscle engagement.*
- Following a moving toy helps babies develop head control and neck strength.*
- Carrying techniques that allow babies to lift their heads can enhance neck strength.*
- Rolling babies onto their tummy from their side activates neck muscles effectively.*
- Avoid pulling newborns into a sitting position before four months for safety reasons.*

- While I love tummy time and highly recommended it as a core activity for babies to do, to promote healthy development, some newborns absolutely hate it. And until your little one is willing to do tummy time, it can be really hard to develop their head control. But the good news is there are lots of different ways that you can develop your baby's neck strength and overall head control, which aren't tummy time. And that's exactly what I'm going to show you in this video.

And once your baby's head control improves they're going to be much more willing to do tummy time as well. The first activity you can do with your little one is roll them onto their side before you pick them up. So in hospital, we're often encouraged to pick up our babies off the floor, the change mat, or from their cot by placing a hand behind their head and then lifting them up. But I encourage you instead to roll your baby onto their side.

And what you'll notice is when you roll your baby onto their side, they automatically switch onto their neck muscles to keep their head in line with their body. Now, this is a reflex

that they're born with and you can use it to help develop your baby's next strength and control. When you are using this technique to pick your baby up off the floor, cot or change table you do want to make sure that you alternate the side that you're rolling your baby onto.

So one time you might roll them onto their left side and the next time you pick them up, you might roll them onto their right side. Playing while lying on their side is also another great position which can help develop neck and head control, as well as encourage them to turn on their tummy muscles, to kick their legs and reach out for those toys. So to put your baby into side-lying, you would simply place them back on the floor and you would straighten one leg.

And with the other leg, you would roll it over the top of their body so that they come into side-lying. Once they're in that position, you want to make sure that both their hands are in front of their body. And they have something interesting to look at, like a toy or an interesting scenery. You also want to place a rolled up towel or your leg behind their back. As this will ensure that they don't roll off their side, onto their back or roll from their side onto their tummy.

And because there is a risk that they will roll onto their tummy. They always want to be supervised when they're in this position. When you are letting your baby playing side lining, it is important to alternate the side that they are lying on as this will ensure that both sides of their body and their neck develop equally. Encouraging your baby to follow a moving toy will also help to develop their neck strength and overall head control.

Being able to follow a moving toy is one of the many exciting milestones your baby is going to achieve in their first year of life. If you want to know what other milestones you can be expecting, then make sure you download my free developmental checklist, which you can find by clicking the link in the description box below. So how do you help your baby follow a moving toy? Well, it's really quite simple. When they're lying on their

back, you simply hold a toy that's in their line of sight and then you move it very, very slowly from one side to the other.

And you will notice that your baby will follow that moving toy with their eyes and then their head. Now being able to turn their head is working on that neck strength and head control. The next activity you can do with your little one is simply carry them in a way that encourages them to lift their head and turn their head. Now, there are lots of different techniques that you can use when you are carrying a newborn which firstly gives them the opportunity to lift their head as well as turn it to the left or right to see what's happening in the world.

Now these include carrying your baby so that their arms are slightly above their shoulder and they have a limited head support and they're having to lift their head against gravity. Another technique is using the football hold where they will need to lift their head to look at the world that's around them. Or you can use a baby carrier or a baby wrap because when they're in these devices, they are required to lift their head and they will turn them to the left or the right to get comfortable.

And lastly, you can hold your baby so that they're facing outwards and you're providing support around their rib cage. And the other hand is underneath their legs. And this ensures that your back is giving their whole body support while they're having to hold their head upright and look to the left and to the right. When you do start to gain the confidence to try tummy time with your little one again, you can also roll them onto their tummy.

So instead of placing them straight onto their tummy in tummy time, you would roll them onto their tummy because this, again, activates that neck righting reflex so that when they roll onto their side, they're automatically going to switch those neck muscles on to keep their head in line with their body. And they will maintain that until they roll onto their tummy. So how do you roll your newborn onto your tummy? Well, if you're going to roll your baby from their back through their left side, onto their tummy, you would simply place them on their back on the floor.

Then you would use one hand and you would grab their left leg and gently straighten it. And with your other

hand, you would place it on their right thigh or their right hip. Gently, you would roll that right leg over the top of their body so that they come onto their tummy. And once they're on their tummy you are gonna need to reposition their hand to make sure that it's no longer stuck underneath their body. Pulling a newborn into sitting is also another activity that parents often get recommended to improve neck and head control.

But this is not an activity that I ever recommend for newborns, particularly under the age of four months for a number of reasons. If you want to know exactly what these reasons are then make sure you watch this video. Remember to click the free PDF document in the description box below, and I'll see you next week where I'll share more parenting tips and tricks.