

Information for parents and carers about....

Promoting Physical Development

Sitting to Crawling

Initially babies may 'commando crawl' on their tummies, usually because they are not yet able to support their body weight on their hands and knees. With practice and development of strength they may move on to the 4-point crawling position. By placing toys in a circle around them, pivoting movements can be encouraged, which are also beneficial in the development of crawling.

Some children will master their motor milestones early and others will be much later and some may miss out on developmental milestones all together, such as crawling. Some babies will learn to bottom shuffle instead.

Bottom-shuffling babies sit on their bottoms and move themselves around using their legs, and sometimes their arms to propel themselves. Bottom-shuffling is often seen in babies who have not tolerated time on their tummy. This is a normal variant.

Safety points

Give your baby lots of opportunities to move about and do not restrict their movements for long periods of time. As they become more mobile make sure the environment is safe and dangerous objects are out of reach.

Physiotherapists and other Health Professionals do NOT recommend the use of baby walkers. There are two main reasons for this:

- Safety – even under supervision there are high numbers of accidents reported every year including: falling down stairs, head injuries, burns, scalds, and trapped arms / legs.
- Delayed development – many studies have shown that baby walkers do not encourage development and often actually delay the achievement of standing and walking. They can also cause a child to walk on their tip-toes, which may continue when they walk independently.

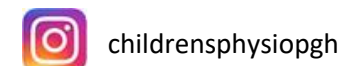
Contact Details:

For further information and advice please visit our Website:
www.poole.nhs.uk/physio and find '[childrens physiotherapy](#)'



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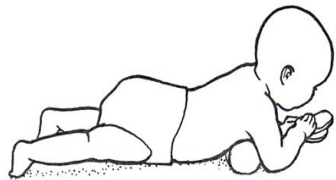


All babies develop at different rates and sometimes in different ways, however the information in this leaflet is intended to provide some useful guidance on positions that may help the development of posture and movement. You can use some of the activities suggested below to help promote your baby's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

Crawling is a normal developmental skill that is very beneficial to aid the development of coordination, shoulder stability and core strength.



To encourage crawling

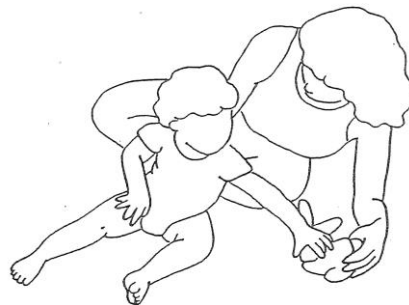


Ensure baby has plenty of time lying on the floor, playing both on their back and their tummy, reaching for and exploring toys.

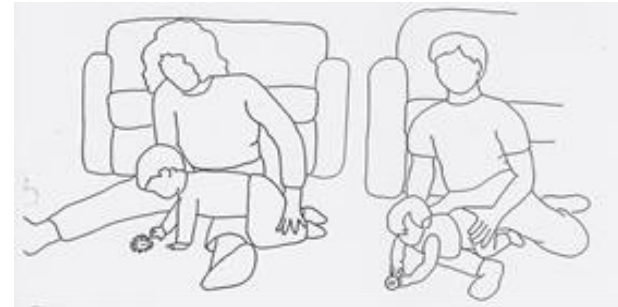
Tummy time helps babies to develop the muscle strength in their shoulders, arms, back and core which they need for crawling.

Before crawling, babies need to get used to, and learn how to, get in and out of 4-point kneeling (hands and knees position) on the floor.

Sit baby between your legs and encourage them to reach for toys placed just out of reach on either side.



Leaning, reaching and twisting to the sides will encourage baby to prop onto their arms and get used to the sensation of weight through their arms and shoulders, and the feeling of rotation.



Progress to baby lying across your leg or a foam roller, and practice reaching and slowly rolling forwards and backwards, with weight going through their hands and knees. This will give them the sensation of the crawling position.



As baby gains strength when kneeling over your leg or a roller, gradually reduce the height or amount of support, or use your hands to gently support them around the hips or under their tummy.

Encourage them to reach forwards and upwards for toys to help them bring their weight forward over their arms and hands.

As they become more confident on their hands and knees, encourage them to reach for toys which may roll away when touched, to encourage them to start moving forwards.

