

Babies love to move around and be active, this is called active play. Playtime on the floor will give your baby the opportunity to be active, get stronger, and want to move into new positions such as sitting, crawling, standing and walking.

***An important part of active play for babies 5–12 months is to help them move from one position to another (e.g. lie to sit, sit to crawl, sit to stand and walk).***

## Sitting with support



- Sit on the floor with your baby between your legs and their back straight and close to your body.
- You may feel more comfortable leaning back on a wall or lounge.
- Bring your legs in close to your baby to give extra support so they can use their hands to play.

## Sitting without support



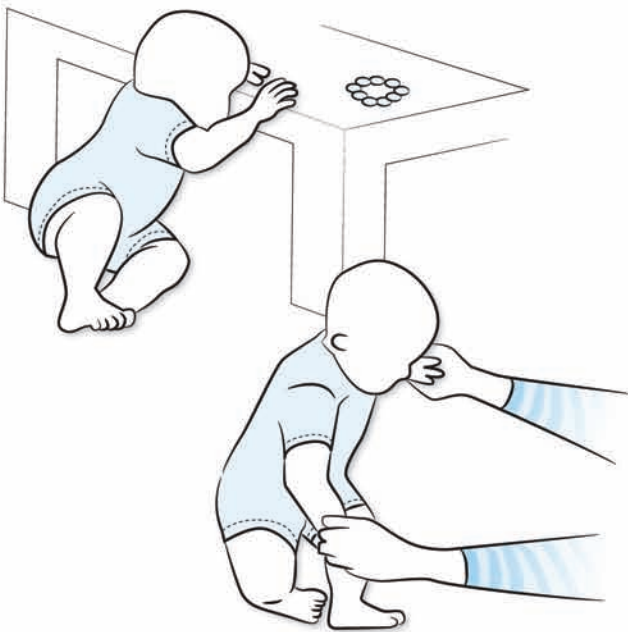
- Sit your baby flat on their bottom on a soft surface.
- Place a cushion on each side of your baby's body and behind them as they may fall backwards.
- Encourage your baby to reach for a toy in front, to the side or up high. As they develop their balance place a toy slightly behind them.



## Learning to crawl

- Sit on the floor with your legs stretched out in front of you.
- Place your baby facedown across your lower leg or on the floor in front of you.
- Place a toy out of reach and encourage your baby to move towards it.
- If your baby is struggling to crawl, support their hips to help them feel comfortable to move forward.

## Learning to stand



- Encourage your baby to pull themselves up to stand by placing their favourite toys out of reach on a low lounge or table.
- This activity will help your baby get ready for walking.

## Learning to walk



- When your baby is strong in standing, get them to stand and hold onto a low piece of furniture such as a coffee table.
- Place toys along the furniture to encourage your baby to walk sideways (cruise) to play with them.
- Sit on the floor behind your baby, place your hands gently onto their hips for support and slowly move sideways with them.

## Helpful hints for moving

- Try not to let your baby spend more than two hours per day in equipment like strollers, rockers, swings, baby seats, walkers or jolly jumpers when awake. Spending more than two hours a day, in this equipment can delay the development of movement skills such as crawling and walking.
- Leave shoes off to play as babies balance better in bare feet.
- Babies will often fall. Playtime on the floor should take place on a soft surface such as a rug.
- Stay close to help your baby play safely. Playing face to face will help you see if your baby is getting tired or not enjoying an activity.
- Provide your baby with new play opportunities every day to help them develop. For example when they crawl put cushions on the floor for them to crawl over and when they walk slowly roll a ball for them to chase.

**REMEMBER, always stay with your baby when they are on their tummy.**

### REMEMBER:

- There is a link between babies sleeping on their tummies and SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome).
- If your baby falls asleep on their tummy, turn them over immediately to sleep on their back.

For further information about SIDS, talk to your doctor or Child and Family Health Nurse at your local Community Health Centre or visit [www.sidsandkids.org](http://www.sidsandkids.org)