

AAP STAND ON WALKERS

BABY WALKERS: A DANGEROUS CHOICE

Baby walkers send thousands of children to hospitals every year. Read about why they are not safe and what you can do. Children in Baby Walkers Can:

- ◆ Roll down the stairs—which often causes broken bones and severe head injuries. This is how most children get hurt in baby walkers.
- ◆ Get burned—a child can reach higher in a walker. It is now easier for a child to pull a tablecloth off a table and spill hot coffee, grab pot handles off the stove, and reach radiators, fireplaces, or space heaters.
- ◆ Drown—a child can fall into a pool or bathtub while in a walker. See Pool Dangers and Drowning Prevention—When It's Not Swimming Time for more information.
- ◆ Be poisoned—reaching high objects is easier in a walker.



- ◆ There are no benefits to baby walkers.
- ◆ Most walker injuries happen while adults are watching. Parents or caregivers simply cannot respond quickly enough. A child in a walker can move more than 3 feet in 1 second! That is why walkers are never safe to use, even with an adult close by.
- ◆ Many parents think walkers will help their children learn to walk. But they don't. In fact, walkers can actually **delay** when a child starts to walk.

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TUMMY TIME



POSITIONING



Tummy Time

Experts in the U.S. recommend that babies sleep on their backs with no crib bumpers, blankets, pillows or fluffy toys in the crib or bassinet. Back to Sleep is recommended until at least 6 to 12 months of age as directed by the baby's pediatrician. These safety measures have been shown to reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) significantly. However, back to sleep is a leading cause of positional malformation of the skull which is called plagiocephaly. **IT IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT TO CONSULT WITH YOUR PEDIATRICIAN BEFORE DISCONTINUING BACK TO SLEEP.**

During "Tummy Time," your child is placed on their stomach while they are awake and someone is watching them. This allows them to experience the world while laying on their tummy.



Tummy Time will:

- ◆ Prevent your baby's head from flattening
- ◆ Improve your baby's motor skills
- ◆ Build strength for sitting up, rolling over, crawling and walking.

Tips for Tummy Time

- ◆ Tummy time must be supervised by a responsible adult at all times.

- ◆ Try short Tummy Time sessions after a diaper change or after baby wakes up from a nap.



- ◆ Place a toy or toys within your baby's reach during tummy time

to help your baby learn to play and interact with his or her surrounds.

- ◆ Place your baby on their stomach. If they cannot



lift their head, place your hand on the baby's bottom and shift the weight from the upper body. If the baby is still unable to lift their head, put a rolled towel under the chest or place the baby over your leg. Another option is to lay

the baby on your chest, offering a secure, cuddly feeling while encouraging a head lift.

- ◆ As soon as your baby comes home from the hospital, they can benefit from 2-3 tummy time sessions each day for approximately 3 -5. minutes per session.



POSITIONING

- ◆ **47% of normal infants develop some form of head deformation**
- ◆ Hold your baby upright when he or she is not sleeping.
- ◆ Limit the amount of time your baby spends in car seats, bouncers, swings and carriers.
- ◆ Change the direction your baby lies in the crib from one week to the next. For example, have your baby's feet point toward one end of the crib for one week and then have their feet point toward the other end of the crib the next week.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends:

- ◆ Sleeping flat on the back is recommended for as long as possible (up to 1 year).
- ◆ Sleeping in the same room as parents is recommended (up to 1 year).
- ◆ Bed-sharing and sleeping on couches, chairs, etc. are not recommended.
- ◆ Swaddling for sleep should be stopped as soon as baby begins to roll over.
- Sitting devices (swings, car seats, etc.) should not be used for sleep.

