



**Playpak Factsheet #03:  
Playpak Therapy Guide -  
Supine (Back) Lying**

All of the activities outlined in this Factsheet are also available to follow by using our animated and narrated online guide. Watch it at [www.fireflyfriends.com/playpak](http://www.fireflyfriends.com/playpak)

### Supine (Back) Lying - why?

Back lying is the most fundamental and secure position from which to work on those physical, cognitive, sensory, and communication skills that build the foundations of more complex skills.



### Cognitive goals

When children bring their hands and feet together to explore, they learn about their own body parts and their relationship to each other. This forms the basis of body awareness and coordination.

### Communication goals

In this position it is easiest for children to become more aware of the people and objects around them. They'll develop skills in paying attention, concentrating and turn-taking - all early stages of communication, language and speech.



### Sensory goals

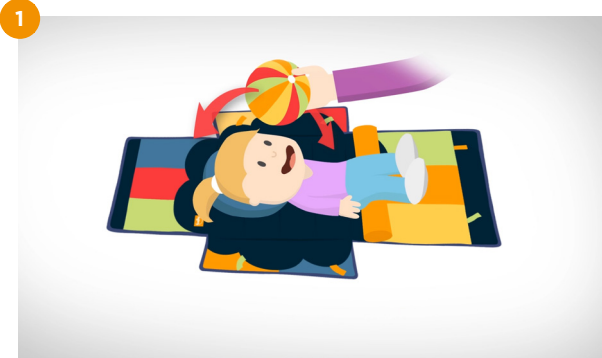
When lying on their backs it is easiest for children to focus their eyes on a dangling object. First they learn to follow it through a quarter of a circle using just their eye movements, then through half a circle moving their head as well as eyes. As they become aware of their own hands and feet and take them to their mouths, their eye-hand coordination and fine motor skills are developing.

### Physical goals

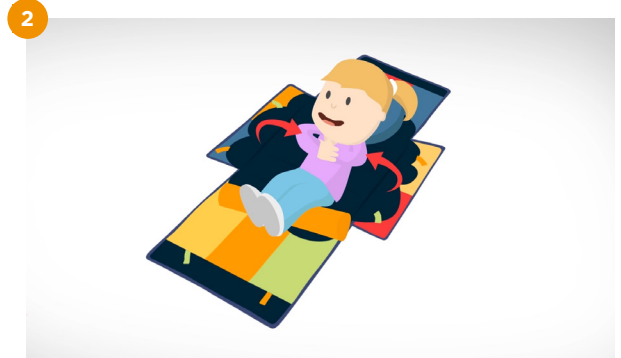
Children will benefit from strengthened neck, tummy, shoulder and hip bending (flexor) muscles because they have to lift their heads, arms and legs up against gravity.



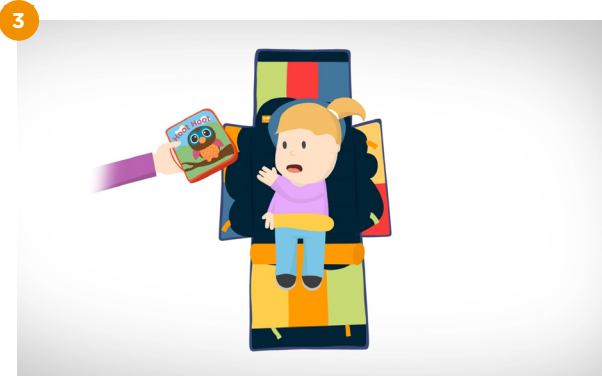
## Supine (Back) Lying Activity Suggestions



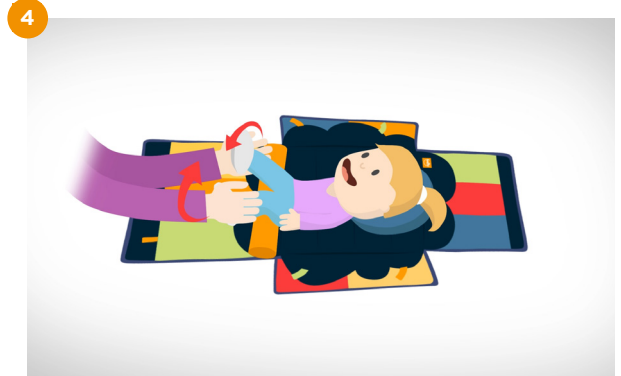
Hold a brightly coloured object (such as a scarf or pom-pom) about 30-40cm above your child's face. Move the object from left to right through a quarter circle, then back, going slowly enough so baby's eyes can follow it. Make the task a little more difficult by holding the object 40-50cm from her face and moving it through a semi-circle to encourage head movements. To help her learn new words, bring the toys you use into her line of vision before you name them.



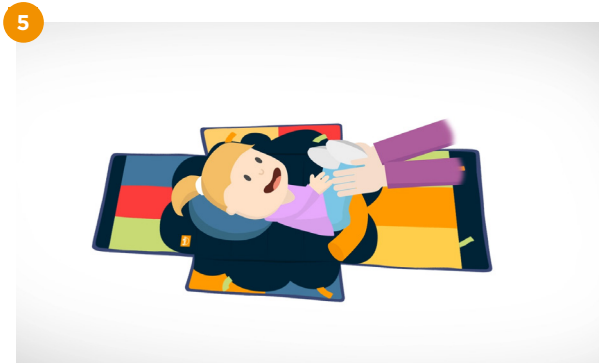
Encourage your child to bring her hands together on her chest. Place your hands behind her shoulders to encourage her arms to come forward.



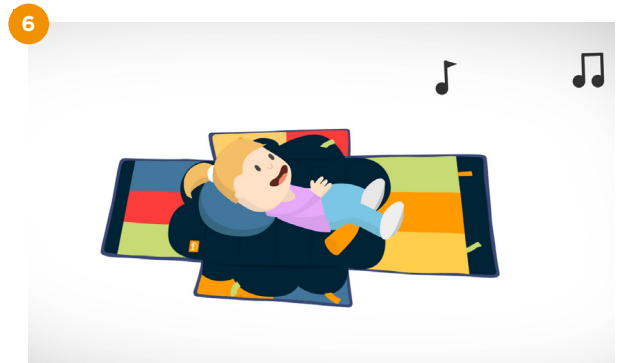
With the same set-up, use the hip positioning strap to stabilise your child's hips. Encourage her to reach across her body with her left hand to a toy on the right side, and vice versa. Place your hand behind her shoulder to assist if necessary. To make this a bit more difficult, remove the pelvic strap and move the toy a little further out of reach. Your child should need to shift her weight at her hips to reach the toy. This is a building block for the transition of rolling later on.



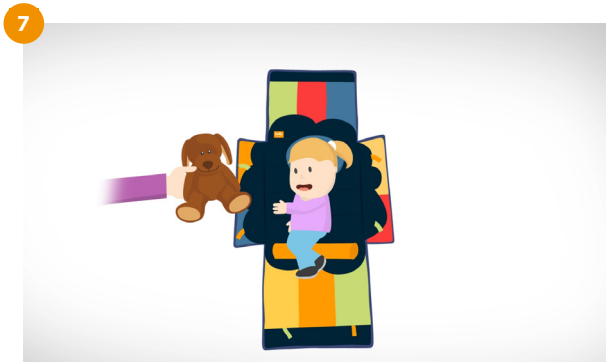
Hold onto your child's feet and help her to kick or "bicycle" her legs. This helps to strengthen tummy, legs and feet, and the reciprocal movement is one which is needed for later weight bearing or movement.



Bring your child's hands and feet together. This midline position is good for symmetry, and baby is beginning to learn to use both sides of her body together.



As she can see your face easily, it is also a good opportunity to play peek-a-boo games and to sing rhymes with actions to help to develop her attention, for example "this is the way we wash our hands", "the wheels on the bus" etc. Copy any sounds she makes back to her. Change the tone (intonation) and emphasis (inflection) of your own voice to link to the movements and to help her focus on the key words.



To encourage rolling, place baby midway between back lying and side lying. Encourage her to reach or kick for a toy so she can begin to roll onto her tummy in a controlled, fluid manner. Help her to move at first by moving her hips or legs, while she works to turn her shoulders.



Make rolling a little more difficult by holding the lower half of the body steady using your hands or the positioning strap. Encourage the child to roll leading with her top half. Position toys just out of reach of baby. As her top half turns, allow her lower half to follow.