

## **My Child Isn't Rolling Yet...Should I Be Concerned?**

Rolling is often a child's first major gross motor milestone and one of the first opportunities for independent mobility. The skill of rolling typically develops in the 3-6 month old age range; however, every child develops at their own rate. Whether your child is within this range or even outside of it, there are some things you can look at to determine if you should or shouldn't be concerned.

### **Some considerations:**

#### **How much time is your child spending on his or her tummy?**

Babies should spend lots of supervised time on their tummy to help them strengthen muscles of the shoulder, neck, trunk, and back. Once they have the foundational strength to lift their head and chest off of the floor, they will start to problem solve ways to move and rolling ability will start to emerge.

#### **If your child is on the floor and he or she starts to fuss or get frustrated do you automatically pick them up and put them in a sitting position (or supportive seat, or carry them)?**

Positions that help children develop strength and musculature are not always the most tolerable because they require work to maintain. One way to help kiddos when they are getting frustrated or upset while in these harder or non-preferred positions, such as tummy time, is to help them to roll over. This way they can begin seeing options for themselves. If they start to learn that they can move out of a position it encourages independent movement as opposed to being dependent on someone coming and picking them up or moving them around.

#### **How much time is your child spending in a carrier, bouncy, bumbo, or stroller?**

Less is always better. Muscular activity greatly decreases when your child is externally supportive so make sure to designate time free of restraints and support to allow for volitional movement and exploration.

### **What can I do to help encourage my child to roll?**

- Tummy time, tummy time, tummy time. Remembering to make sure it is supervised.
- Help them roll over. Show them that they have options.
- Have your child lay on his or her side while playing with toys. This helps them build orientation to a position that is a part of rolling.

### **When should I seek some additional advice?**

- Child isn't tolerating time on the floor
- Child is sitting on their own by not rolling
- The above activities do not seem to help

### **Who should I go to for advice?**

- Express your concerns to your child's pediatrician.
- Seek advice from a pediatric physical therapist who has experience working with children to help promote age-appropriate gross motor skill development.