



HOW TO GROW AND NOURISH A DEVELOPING SPINE

Developmental milestones are largely pre-determined and predictable, but meeting them does not happen without the right conditions. The same is very much the case for a healthy, developing spine.

Without control and strength of the spine we can't develop normal movement patterns and posture.

Physical "exercise" starts in the womb when baby moves and turns. Contractions of the uterus and the passage through the birth canal relies on movement of baby's spine, rib cage and cranium.

If the birthing process was challenging, or a caesarian delivery was needed, we immediately look out for trauma to the spine.

C-Shape becomes S-Shape

The upper part of the S, the cervical lordosis, forms when the infant can support the head upright. Tummy time, ideally 30 minutes daily, develops neck extensors for this. Tummy time also trains the extensor muscles in the lower spine to let baby crawl, stand and eventually walk.

Once baby can stand and walk, the hollow or lumbar lordosis forms and the spine eventually has an S-shape when looked at sideways. Interestingly, proper diaphragmatic breathing relies on good spinal curves. Breathing moves from the chest to the more adult-like belly breathing.

***Provide a safe
environment, incentive
to move, room to fall &
fail with support and
patience rather than
pressure to improve***





Helpful Hints:

- Young spines love movement!
- Start tummy time straight from birth
- Don't wrap or swaddle baby for too long
- Be familiar with gross motor milestones
- Don't accept that your baby will not crawl
- It is crucial that they go through the crawling stage
- Provide steady, soft floors to fall on
- Have obstacles to conquer
- No shoes first 8 weeks of walking
- Encourage your child to learn new skills and explore

Get regular checkups

Ensure that you get your child checked regularly by a paediatric chiropractor, so that way issues can be identified in time for them to be corrected. Freeing stiff areas, training weak muscles and improving movement patterns can make a world of difference to the growing body. Knowing what to look out for as a parent can also be very helpful.

Why not wait and see?

If you wait months and years down the track remodelling is not always possible. The growth plates in the lower part of the spine close by 18 years for girls and by 20 for boys. That is typically when we reach our full height. It also means that spinal curves tend to be more permanent.

The developing spine needs plenty of sunshine, watering and fertilising!

The **Sunshine** is a place in the world to move, to be challenged through play, exercise and learning new physical skills.

Water can be loading, strength progression while weight bearing on land, swimming or sky diving for that matter.

Fertilising symbolises good nutrition, non-smoking, low exposure to toxic chemicals, adequate rest after exercise and consistent good sleep in a comfortable bed.

Book your baby in for a checkup in the school holidays on **9743 1336** *Happy holidays!*

