



Developmental Care

POSITIONING AND DEVELOPMENTAL POSITIONING AIDS

Why is positioning important?

- ▶ Appropriate positioning is one of the easiest ways to have an immediate impact on a baby's current state (behavior) and comfort.
- ▶ Proper positioning gives your baby feelings of control and security.
- ▶ If a baby is not positioned well or with good positional support it can have both immediate and long term negative affects.

Why is positioning important?

- ▶ Negative Affects

- ▶ Immediate:

- ▶ Your baby can pull out his/her intubation tube that is helping it breathe
 - ▶ Vital signs (heart rate and oxygen) can drop affecting brain development
 - ▶ Your baby can lose sleep which is the most important thing a baby needs for good brain development

- ▶ Long Term:

- ▶ Positional deformities of muscles and tendons
 - ▶ Delayed and abnormal movement patterns
 - ▶ Asymmetrical Posture (baby will only look one way, flat spots on head)
 - ▶ Feeding difficulties

Goals Of Good Positioning

- ▶ Promote good sleep to help with brain development
 - ▶ Your baby's brain develops when he/she is sleeping
- ▶ Encourage self-soothing abilities
- ▶ Maintain good behavioral states
 - ▶ Quiet Alert State, Light Sleep State vs. Crying or Shut Down States
- ▶ Conserve Energy/Encourage weight gain
 - ▶ The more calm your baby is, the less calories he/she will lose from moving around and being stressed
- ▶ Enhance postural alignment
 - ▶ We need both sides of our body to work equally. It would be really hard to walk if we always looked to the left and our right leg was always bent and rotated outward

Goals Of Good Positioning

- ▶ Promote Flexed arms and legs and rounded shoulders
 - ▶ Infant should always be FLEXED, CONTAINED and in GOOD ALIGNMENT
- ▶ Promote focus on midline
 - ▶ Hands, arms and legs should always be positioned towards the baby's middle (belly button, nose, heart)
- ▶ Maintain and promote good head shaping (Round Heads)

Key Things to Remember

- ▶ Babies in the NICU will be positioned on their sides, back and tummy
 - ▶ If your baby has an IV (line) in their belly button, he/she will not sleep on his/her tummy until the line is removed
 - ▶ As your baby is stable and a few weeks from their due date he/she will stop sleeping on their tummy and sides and only sleep on his/her back in preparation for going home where he/she will only sleep on their back.
- ▶ It is important to leave your baby in a new position (different from how you found him/her) after each care time
 - ▶ This prevents flat spots on heads and skin break down
- ▶ In ANY position, your baby should be FLEXED, CONTAINED and in ALIGNMENT (imagine the fetal position)
 - ▶ If you keep these 3 things in mind it will help you achieve a good developmental position

Supine (Back-down) Position

- ▶ Hands near mouth
- ▶ Containment of arms and legs
- ▶ Foot support
- ▶ Legs tucked, keeping knees slightly apart
- ▶ Keep head in midline
- ▶ Provide support behind shoulders to keep them slightly forward



Prone (tummy-down) Position

- ▶ Arms and legs are tucked close to the chest and stomach, keeping knees slightly apart
- ▶ Pillow under trunk is providing firm support
- ▶ Shoulders are rounded toward the mattress
- ▶ Alternate turning of head



Side-lying Position

- ▶ Hands near mouth
- ▶ Shoulders are rounded toward the mattress
- ▶ Arms and legs are flexed toward the chest and stomach
- ▶ Provide back and foot support
- ▶ Keep head in midline or slightly flexed
- ▶ Offer opportunities to grasp or suck pacifier



Positioning Aids



We have tools to make positioning easier and keep your baby contained. These tools are called Positioning Aids.



Bendy Bumper



- ▶ The Bendy is like a really large, unbent, paperclip covered with a soft pillow
 - ▶ The bendy is intended to mold around your baby
 - ▶ Should always be molded closely/touching the infant to offer adequate support
 - ▶ Should not be in front of the infant's face



Bendy Bumper



Please DO NOT Bend Bendy Bumpers in Half – They will break



Bendy Bumper



Bendy Bumpers come in 2 sizes

- ▶ The small bendy should be used with very small babies
- ▶ The large bendy should be used with small to large babies
- ▶ Bendys are designed to allow a baby to push into them. If your baby can straighten his/her arm forward while on his/her side and reach over and past the small bendy, they are appropriate for the bigger one.

Bendy Bumpers have a top and bottom



Smooth and Rounded = Top



Flat with Seam = Bottom

Snugglies



- ▶ Snugglies are intended to provide boundaries to help maintain a flexed position.
- ▶ The bottom, padded foot pad is designed to keep legs tucked and flexed
- ▶ The lower strap helps keep legs tucked
- ▶ The upper strap helps keep hands up by your baby's face and shoulders rounded

There are 4 sizes of Snugglies

- ▶ As your baby grows, he/she will advance into bigger snugglies
 - ▶ XS – Less than 900 grams (1 pound 15 ounces)
 - ▶ S – 900-1350 grams (1 pound 15 ounces – 2 pounds 15 ounces)
 - ▶ M – 1300-2250 grams (2 pounds 13 ounces – 4 pounds 15 ounces)
 - ▶ L – Greater than 2250 grams (4 pounds 15 ounces)

Frog



- ▶ The frog is a bean bag filled sack that may be placed around the head, neck or hips, or can be used to position an arm or leg.
- ▶ The “legs” of the frog can be adjusted separately for special positioning needs
- ▶ Most commonly you will use this to help with head positioning
- ▶ Do Not place the entire frog ON TOP of your baby – it is too heavy!



Z-flo



- ▶ The z-flo pillow is a moldable, soft pillow that will hold whatever position you put it in.
- ▶ When on his/her back or side, the pillow should be long from left to right (like you would lay on your pillow).
- ▶ When your baby is on his/her back, the pillow should always be under the head and shoulders to prevent his/her head from falling forward making it harder to breathe.
- ▶ When your baby is on his/her tummy, the pillow should be long from head to toes.
- ▶ When on his/her tummy line the bottom up with the belly button, squeeze the pillow into a slight hour glass to allow both arms to “hug the pillow” and head should lay looking left or right.
 - ▶ It is ok if there is a large section of the pillow sticking out above your baby’s head if he/she is very small.

Bonding Blanket

- ▶ After delivery you should receive a small square swaddle blanket.
- ▶ These blankets are made by volunteers in our unit.
- ▶ They are designed for you to sleep with or wear around your neck every so often to absorb your scent
 - ▶ Take them home to wash and “re-scent” them as often as you like.
- ▶ Bonding blankets can be used to provide containment through swaddling, stretching over the top of a bendy bumper, as an eye cover to protect eyes from bright lights, as a pillow case or even as a small roll to help keep knees from touching.
- ▶ Be creative and keep these blankets close to your baby so they can be close to you even when you are not.



Positioning Laundry

- ▶ Please DO NOT throw any of our positioning aids or covers (anything with rainbow colored hearts/small pillow cases for the z-flow) into the laundry bin in the room.
- ▶ We clean all aids and covers in the unit. Please set them aside and one of us will put any dirty or no longer needed items in their proper location

Positioning Aids at Home

- ▶ Positioning Aids are for use in the NICU ONLY!
- ▶ When your baby is stable, eating a majority of his/her feeds and has the possibility of going home in a week or 2, we will start taking away the positioning aids.
- ▶ At home, your baby will only be swaddled to maintain boundaries and a flexed position
 - ▶ At home they will be old enough to only need swaddling or a sleep sack for support
 - ▶ Using positioning aids at home is against recommendations for reducing the risk of SIDS (sudden infant death syndrome)