Hello, my name is Jaime. How are you? I am a physical therapy student from the United States and I have information about how to help your baby grow strong muscles. Would you like to hear it?

Great. I have three topics to share with you today: tummy time, swaddling and sling use. Since I do not speak Spanish very well, it would be great if you could save questions until the end so that I can request a translator. OK?

First I will talk about tummy time (refer to handout). Placing a baby on his belly encourages him to lift his head. This helps his back, neck, and tummy muscles grow and become strong. When these muscles are strong the baby can learn how to roll, crawl, sit and walk sooner. This allows the baby to explore his environment which helps his brain develop. Tummy time also prevents the baby from having a flat head and short neck muscles. Sometimes these things happen when babies spend a lot of time laying on their back.

It is best for a baby to spend 60 minutes on his tummy each day. This does not have to be all at once, it can be split up throughout the day- choose a schedule that works for you. 60 minutes can be a long time, so try to start with 30 minutes a day and work up to 60 minutes. It is important to remember that the baby should always be awake and with an adult when he is on his belly. Tummy time should occur on a bed or on a blanket on the floor.

There are many different ways to play with the baby on his belly as you can see in the pictures (refer to handout). You can lay with the baby on your chest, sit with the baby on your lap, you can get onto the floor with your baby; while on the floor you can play with toys or sing to him or smile at him. With a toy or your face, you can try to encourage the baby to look in all different directions or reach out. If the baby is very young and cannot hold his head up, you can place a blanket under his chest to help. Sometimes babies cry when they are on their belly, if your baby does not like being on the floor, try laying him on your chest, this may help soothe him. Some crying is ok, but if the baby is very upset you can pick him up and just try again later.

Would you like to practice tummy time with your baby on this blanket?

Would you like to keep this toy?

Would you like to choose a toy to take home?

The next thing I would like to talk about is how your baby sleeps (refer to sleep handout). Babies who cannot roll over on their own should always sleep on their back. If a young baby who cannot roll over sleeps on his belly, he could stop breathing in the night. Wrapping the baby in a blanket helps him feel comfortable on his back and sleep better. It is important that the blanket is snug so that it will not unwrap, but not too tight. To do this we use a technique called “swaddling.” I will show you how to swaddle using this doll (demonstrate with doll):

1. First, fold the top corner down

2. Place the baby on top of the blanket

3. Fold this side over the baby

4. Fold the bottom part of the blanket up to the top

5. Tuck in this little corner

6. And fold this side all the way around and under the baby

Depending on what your baby likes, you can swaddle with his arms in the blanket or outside of the blanket

Would you like to practice swaddling your baby, over here on the blanket?

Would you like to keep this blanket?

Would you like to have a blanket?

Lastly, I’ll talk about different ways for you to carry your baby (refer to slings handout). Carrying the baby in a sling makes him feel lighter and allows you to use both hands for other things. But, you should try to change the way you use the sling throughout the day. Changing how you carry the baby in the sling helps him use different muscles so that they all become strong. It is also good for your body; changing positions often will prevent tired muscles and back pain. Here are some different options. You can carry the baby against your back facing toward you or away from you. You can also carry the baby in the front of your body either facing you or facing out. Or you can carry a baby laying on his back. There are many other options, you should find ways that are comfortable for you and your baby, the important thing is to change the position throughout the day.

Would you like to take a sling?

Thank you very much for listening, do you have any questions?

Other Phrases:

Please wait one moment while I find a translator

I’ll be right back.

What is your baby’s name?

How old is your baby?

Would you like to try?

Can I show you?

Show me how you would do it.