



# Creeping Creeping



This is the time when infants lift off the floor and set forth on hands and knees, like a tiger or cat. They also sit themselves up and pull themselves to a standing position. They cruise around the furniture as they develop the strength and balance for walking.

## Why is creeping so important?

- In the hands and knees position our infant is gaining tremendous muscle development, especially of the hands. This is so important for the development of fine motor skills, such as writing.
- Our babies are also learning to coordinate the two sides of the body with the hand on one side and the knee of the other hitting the floor at exactly the same time. Body rhythm and timing are important for thinking and moving required in later written work at school.
- Vision is being fine-tuned. The distance between the infant's eyes and floor when creeping, is the same distance required between the eyes and book at school age, for normal vision. Our infants are learning to focus down at their knees then up at distant objects, making many visual adjustments from near to far and back again, as they will be required to do between blackboard and book at school!

It is important for parents to realize that infants will sit themselves when their back muscles are ready. In normal development this occurs about the time of creeping - the infant pivots sideways and sits.





Let your infants sit and walk in their own time - allow nature to dictate the terms of development. Just provide the appropriate opportunities. There is a reason for each stage. Don't be in a hurry for your child to walk.

It's not how early they walk, but how much they learn about themselves and their world before they walk that will influence the development of their intelligence.

### Ways to help your infant learn and develop

- Regular massage.
- Movement activities - exercises help baby feel movement and gain awareness of body parts while stimulating muscle tone and strength.
- Take baby for walks in the pram, over roughish ground.
- Swing baby in a hammock or towel between two people.
- Dance with baby to different varieties of music.
- Rock baby in a cradle or rocking chair.
- Baby capsules are vital for safety in the car but are of no value for development. Keep the capsule in the car, don't use it for other purposes.
- Don't wrap your baby up so firmly that movement isn't possible.
- Frequently change the position of the cot and the baby's position in the cot so that light and movement comes from different directions.
- If you are not breast feeding, alternate sides when feed with the bottle. This way the baby experiences touch and alternatively the ability to move. Each eye also has the opportunity to see.
- Don't prop up your babies before they learn to sit by themselves.

