



Patient Information

Developmental Milestones for Infants

Your baby will make enormous gains in development during the very important first year. In fact, if your baby is like the average baby, he or she will nearly triple in birth weight and grow 10 inches in the first year. Your baby will also learn basic language and motor skills that will serve him or her throughout life.

Because your baby is influenced by surroundings, he or she needs a loving, safe and stable environment to develop normally. Holding your baby and responding to his or her cries are central to creating a strong, healthy parent-child bond. It's impossible to spoil a baby—in fact, babies who don't get the emotional and physical nurturing they need won't grow as they should mentally or physically.

To check that your baby is developing on schedule, experts recommend well-baby visits at 2 and 4 weeks of age, and again at 2, 4, 6, 9 and 12 months of age. During these visits, weight, height, reflexes and development will be checked, and your baby will receive important immunizations.

Here are some developmental milestones you and your NP should keep an eye on:

By age 3 months, does your baby:

- Lift his head and chest and turn his head from side to side when he lies on his stomach?
- Follow a moving object with her eyes?
- Often hold his hands open or loosely fist and grasp toys you give to him?
- Wiggle and kick with her arms and legs?
- Respond to bright colors, lights and voices?
- Recognize the bottle or breast?
- Make cooing, gurgling sounds?
- Smile when smiled at, and usually quiet down at the sound of a soothing voice or when you hold her?
- Communicate hunger, fear and discomfort through crying or facial expression?
- Anticipate being lifted, and react to peek-a-boo games?

By age 6 months, does your baby:

- Hold her head steady when sitting with help?

- Reach for, grasp and shake objects?
- Help hold the bottle during feeding?
- Explore by mouthing and banging objects?
- Move toys from one hand to another?
- Pull up to a sitting position on his own if you grasp his hands?
- Sit with only a little support, and roll over?
- Bounce when held in a standing position?
- Open her mouth for the spoon?
- Imitate familiar actions you perform?
- Babble, making almost singsong sounds?
- Recognize familiar faces and smile at himself in a mirror?
- Laugh and squeal with delight or scream if annoyed?

By age 12 months, does your baby:

- Drink from a cup with help?
- Feed herself finger food such as raisins or bread crumbs?
- Place small blocks in a container and then remove them?
- Sit well without support?
- Crawl on his hands and knees?
- Pull herself to stand or take steps holding onto furniture?
- Stand alone momentarily and walk with one hand held?
- Copy sounds and actions you make?
- Respond to music with body motion?
- Try to accomplish simple goals, such as seeing a toy and then crawling toward it?
- Babble, but it sometimes "sounds like" talking?
- Say his first word and try to "talk" with you?
- Recognize family members' names and understand simple commands?
- Respond to another's distress by showing distress or crying?
- Show affection to familiar adults and apprehension about strangers?
- Show mild to severe anxiety at separation from you?
- Raise her arms when she wants to be picked up?

If you have questions about your child's development or want to have your child tested, talk to your nurse practitioner.

Adapted from the National Network for Child Care Web site, www.nncc.org.

Additional Notes:
