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MEDICLINIC baby YOUR BABY'S DEVELOPMENT



THE SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT INFLUENCE ON A CHILD'S INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT IS THE RESPONSIVENESS OF THE MOTHER TO THE CUES OF HER BABY.

EXPERTISE YOU CAN TRUST.

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EQUIPMENT TO AVOID FOR ALL AGES

The equipment below has been shown to delay normal development especially when children are learning to sit and walk. Therefore these are particularly unsuitable for babies born prematurely.

- **‘Sit in’ baby walkers**

These encourage babies to walk on their toes and decrease the use of their tummy muscles. This stops their development of balance and body control. Babies need time on the floor to master rolling, sitting and crawling before being placed on their feet to walk. The ‘push along’ baby walkers are advised instead for babies that need support with walking.

- **Doorway jumping seats**

These also encourage babies to walk on their toes and to arch their back.



BABY'S MILESTONES

BABY'S NAME: _____

DATE OF BIRTH: _____

Smiled: _____

Crawled: _____

Looked and followed me with their eyes: _____

Pointed to what they want: _____

Lifted their head in tummy time: _____

Pulled to stand: _____

Held a toy: _____

Waved goodbye: _____

Started babbling: _____

Said their first word: _____

Rolled from back to front: _____

Scribbled: _____

Rolled from front to back: _____

Walked: _____

Clapped their hands: _____

Stacked cups: _____

Sat unsupported: _____

YOUR BABY AT 2 MONTHS

What most babies do at this age:

• **Movement/Physical development:**

- During tummy time baby is starting to lift their head and shoulders
- Making smooth movements with arms and legs
- Hands are open most of the time

• **Social/Emotional**

- Begins to smile
- Can briefly calm themselves with hands to mouth
- Makes eye contact

• **Language/Communication**

- Coos or makes gurgling sounds
- Will turn head to sounds
- Decreases sucking in response to unfamiliar or loud sounds

• **Cognitive (learning and problem solving)**

- Starts to pay attention to faces, especially parents
- Will start to follow parents or lights/sounds

What activities can I do with my 2 month old baby?

- When sitting close to each other, guide your child's hands to feel your face
- Lie child on tummy for a few minutes several times during the day on a firm surface. Ensure they are supervised at all times
 - Make sure his arms are not tucked underneath
 - Give him something interesting to look at while on

his tummy e.g. shake a rattle/noisy or bright toy or let him see himself in a mirror. Position this about 25-30 cm away from his eyes

- Alternate the position of toys/mobiles in area of cot/play area
- Place your baby on their side with a rolled up blanket/pillow behind them for support. Encourage them to bring their hands together, bring their hands to their face and feel different textures
- Talk to your child from both sides and encourage your child to turn their head to see you
- Use brightly coloured, interesting objects (that may also make a sound) for child to look at and slowly move it across their line of vision to the side in an arc

When to contact your doctor or speak to a therapist:

- Struggling to lift head when placed on their tummy
- Flattening of the head
- A preference to turn their head to one side only
- No response to loud sounds
- Not starting to smile
- Doesn't watch things as they move
- Doesn't bring hands to mouth
- If your baby is stiff and difficult to move/handle



YOUR BABY AT 4 MONTHS



What most babies do at this age:

• **Movement/Physical development:**

- Holds head steady when in supported sitting or tummy time position
- May be able to roll over
- Brings hands to mouth
- When on tummy will push through elbows
- Can hold a small toy and will reach to dangling toys

• **Social/Emotional**

- Smiling spontaneously at people
- Enjoys playing with people and may cry when playing stops
- May be able to copy some movements and expressions like smiling

• **Language/Communication**

- Begins to babble
- Cries in various ways to show tiredness, hunger or pain

• **Cognitive (learning and problem solving)**

- Responds to affection
- Recognises familiar people
- Lets you know if they are happy or sad
- Uses hands and eyes together, for example reaching for toys

What activities can I do with my 4 month old baby?

- By tapping your child's hand with the toy/object, it helps your child to be aware of it

- At first make it easy for him to reach, and gradually try to make it a little more challenging, by positioning yourself/ the toy a little bit further away

- During tummy time a firmer surface is easier to push up against, so a covered floor space will be easier than when on a cushion

- If your child needs additional help rolling, place your hands on his shoulders or hips and gently guide your child onto his back. As your child begins to do some of the movement himself, gradually reduce the amount you are helping

- Choose times when your child is alert and well rested to begin some interactions

- Talk and sing to your child using body movement

When to contact your doctor or speak to a therapist:

- Struggling to hold their own head in the sitting position
- Doesn't make any sounds
- Not bringing objects to their mouth
- Doesn't watch people or objects when they move
- Not smiling at people



YOUR BABY AT 6 MONTHS

What most babies do at this age:

• **Movement/Physical development:**

- Starts to sit unsupported
- Is able to roll in both directions
- Starts to move when placed on tummy in circles or back and forward
- When on their back they are starting to lift head and arms to be picked up

• **Social/Emotional**

- Friendly with strangers but occasionally showing some shyness
- Likes to play with others
- Shows delighted response to rough and tumble play
- Takes everything to their mouth

• **Language/Communication**

- Vocalises often and strings vowels together (“ah,” “goo,” “muh”)
- Responds to own name
- Responds to sounds by making sounds
- Laughs and squeals
- Responds to changes in your voice
- Pays attention to music/singing

• **Cognitive (learning and problem solving)**

- Begins to pass things from one hand to another
- Starts to show interest in things out of their reach and tries to get to them

What activities can I do with my 6 month old baby?

- Play peek-a-boo when pulling clothing over his head and use his name

- When sitting, help to position your child so that his hands are beside, in front or on his knees to offer support when needed
- During tummy time, put toys slightly out of reach to encourage your baby to move
- Provide a spoon with a thicker handle for your child to hold
- When he is holding one small item in one hand, offer him a favourite small item to the same hand. Encourage him to move one item to the other hand
- Pause during activities to watch how your child is responding, e.g., if they turn away or look worried, then change the activity. If they are chuckling or laughing continue for a few moments longer
- Sing nursery rhymes using body movement

When to contact your doctor or speak to a therapist:

- Shows no affection for family or parents
- Not starting to sit unaided
- Appears to have very stiff movements
- Appears very floppy
- Doesn't laugh or squeal
- Doesn't respond to surrounding sounds
- Not bringing toys or objects to their mouth

YOUR BABY AT 9 MONTHS

What most babies do at this age:

• **Movement/Physical development:**

- Pulls self to sitting position and can sit unsupported
- Moves on the floor by rolling, shuffling or crawling
- Starts to pull to stand
- Can stand when holding on to a surface

• **Social/Emotional**

- Is able to clearly distinguish between familiar people and strangers – may start to cling to parents
- Enjoys “peekaboo” and will imitate clapping
- Starts to bang toys together
- Has favourite toys

• **Language/Communication**

- Understands “no” and “bye”
- Starts to make lots of different and new sounds
- Starts to use fingers to point to objects or people

• **Cognitive (learning and problem solving)**

- Begins to look for things you hide from them
- Moves things from one hand to the other smoothly
- Watches activities of people or animals within 3-4 metres with a sustained interest for a few minutes
- Continues to put things in their mouth

What activities can I do with my 9 month old baby?

- Try to have some activities positioned at his eye level when he is in a standing position:

- In front of a mirror with you supporting him
- At a small table with you holding him
- At a low window with you holding him
- Position child on knees and facing low table/chair with an interesting toy on it
- Show your child how to make a sound by banging things together. Talk about what you are doing and help them to also do it by guiding their hands
- Try to position yourself so that your child can see your face and the way your mouth is shaped when you make sounds with your child
- Imitate the sounds that he makes and encourage him to repeat them

When to contact your doctor or speak to a therapist:

- Not sitting unaided
- Not putting weight through their feet when placed in standing
- Doesn't respond to own name
- Doesn't seem to recognise familiar people
- Not babbling





YOUR BABY AT 1 YEAR

What most babies do at this age:

• **Movement/Physical development:**

- Pulls to stand and will walk using the furniture (cruise)
- May be able to walk with one hand held or sometimes independently
- May stand alone for a few moments
- Moves around the floor with ease by crawling, bottom shuffling or bear walking

• **Social/Emotional**

- Is more aware of strangers and will get upset when a parent leaves
- Enjoys games such as “pat-a-cake” or “peek-a-boo”
- Repeats sounds or actions to get attention
- Shows fear in some situations

• **Language/Communication**

- Babbles loudly and has changes in tone
- Uses simple gestures like shaking head or waving
- Responds to simple spoken requests
- Starts to intentionally say words such as “mama” or “dada”

• **Cognitive (learning and problem solving)**

- Drops and throws toys deliberately and watches them fall to ground
- Copies gestures
- Explores things in different ways, like shaking, banging and throwing
- Able to put things into and out of a container
- Looks at right picture or object when its named

What activities can I do with my 1 year old baby?

- Hold both his hands when walking. Hold his hands towards his sides and not higher than his shoulders
- Position furniture in your rooms so that your child can move between them e.g. holding onto the couch and then the coffee table
- When your child has finished their bottle or with the spoon, hold your hand under the item and encourage your child to release it into your hand
- Let your child hold a picture book or small photo album during change times. Talk about who/what is in the pictures
- Talk to your child about what you are doing together. Use names of objects/toys

When to contact your doctor or speak to a therapist:

- Doesn't crawl or bottom shuffle
- Not putting feet down when placed in standing
- Is not saying single words such as “mama” or “dada”
- No imitation of gestures such as waving or shaking head
- Starts to lose skills that they previously had or if development looks like it's going backwards



YOUR BABY AT 18 MONTHS

What most babies do at this age:

• **Movement/Physical development:**

- Walks independently
- May be able to walk up steps and start to run
- Enjoys climbing
- Squats to ground to pick up objects
- Eat independently with spoon

• **Social/Emotional**

- Starts to show affection to familiar people
- May have temper tantrums
- Explores surroundings but looks for familiar person nearby
- Likes to hand things to others to play
- Plays simple pretend with dolls or teddies

• **Language/Communication**

- Says various single words
- Says and shakes head “no”
- Points to show what they want

• **Cognitive (learning and problem solving)**

- Can follow one-step verbal commands e.g. sit down
- Understands what everyday items are
- Can sometimes point to body parts
- Starts to scribble

What activities can I do with my 18 month old baby?

- Create opportunities for squatting to pick up item, e.g. pebbles from the ground, toys from a basket

- When climbing, guide your child’s movements initially and then reduce the amount of help you give him as he gains strength and skills: right hand/left knee then left hand/right knee
- Let your child choose which hand to scribble with by placing the crayon/marker directly in front of your child and not to the left or to the right
- When your child uses a word, try to repeat it back to him using a phrase, so that he can hear it again and learn the extra words, e.g., child says ‘yummy’, you can reply: ‘yes, yummy ice cream’
- When you are talking about a body part with your child, touch it and when practical try to make sure it is positioned where he can see it

When to contact your doctor or speak to a therapist:

- Not walking independently
- Doesn’t have at least six single words
- Doesn’t notice when caregivers or familiar people arrive or leave
- Doesn’t copy others
- No pointing to show things to others