

PEDIATRIC DEVELOPMENTAL MILESTONES



A discussion
guide for parents
and medical care
providers.

Development milestones help you see how your child is doing compared with other children the same age.

The following milestones explain you what you should expect to see from your child in the following areas:

- Speech/Language/Social
- Gross Motor
- Feeding/Eating
- Fine/Visual Motor (Daily Living Skills)

If your child is meeting the milestones, his or her development is on track.

If your child continually misses milestones or reaches a milestone but then loses that new ability, he or she may need extra help from your doctor or a specialist.

Your child's doctor will check for certain milestones at routine checkups, but it's also important for you to learn and watch for these milestones at home.

Children usually move in a natural and predictable way from one milestone to the next. However, each child grows and gains skills at their own pace.

Some children may be advanced in one area, such as language, but behind in another, such as sensory and motor development.

2 MONTHS

Feeding/Eating (OT)

Milestones:

- Suck/Swallow/Breathe pattern present
- Eating from breast/bottle with appropriate latch/lip closure
- Tongue moves in the back-forth motion, slightly extended past lips
- Alertness level appropriate to complete a feeding
- Consumes at least 2 ounces per feeding (up to 6)

Referral Needed:

- Losing a lot of liquid from mouth/lips
- Fatiguing while eating to the point of not gaining weight
- Gagging/choking on liquid or gasping for air
- Lip or tongue tie issues/post-correction
- Eating less than 2 ounces per feeding
- Unable to eat from a bottle or breast
- Uses an NG or G-tube

Congratulations on welcoming a new addition to your family!

As your child grows, it is important to watch for developmental milestones.

Because every child grows and develops at their own rate, use these milestones as a guide for conversation with your medical care provider, to determine if early intervention can benefit the unique needs of your little one.

Fine/Visual Motor (Daily Living Skills) (OT)

Milestones:

- Hands not fistled 50% of the time
- Retains rattle if placed in hand
- Holds hands together
- Opens and shuts hands

Referral Needed:

- Hands not opening/remain fistled 100% of the time
- Hands don't come to midline

2 MONTHS



Speech/Language/Social

Milestones:

- Startles at loud noises
- Smiles or becomes quiet when you talk; starts to smile back
- Makes cooing noises
- Different cries for different reasons

Referral Needed:

- Does not turn head or orient body to your voice
- Does not startle at loud noises

Gross Motor (PT)

Milestones:

- Begins head control, with decreased head lag in pull to sit
- Lefts head 45 degrees when on stomach
- Begins extending arms and legs
- Turns head to each side to noises

Referral Needed:

- Obvious flat spot on skull
- Head always turned to one side or with tilt in supine
- Unable to lift head when placed in tummy time

Torticollis Warning Signs

- Baby prefers one side for positioning, feeding and sleeping
- Flatness present on any area of the skull
- Facial asymmetries
- Uneven ears from the front or back
- Baby rolls younger than 3 months
- Baby rolls repeatedly over one shoulder, unable to roll over both shoulders
- Tightness or palpable mass on either sternocleidomastoid

4 MONTHS

Speech/Language/Social

Milestones:

- Moves eyes toward you when you speak
- Responds to changes in your voice
- Starts to pay attention to music and songs
- Coos and babbles with you and when alone
- Develops giggles and laughs
- Makes sounds of pleasure and displeasure
- Starts to develop sounds such as *pa, ma, duh, k,* and *g*

Referral Needed:

- Does not seem to notice when others are speaking or orient head or body to noises
- Does not make eye contact when you are talking or playing
- Does not play with sounds or does not make sounds

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Gross Motor (PT)

Milestones:

- Holds head steady with body support
- Straightens legs when feet are placed on flat surface
- Begins to roll from tummy to back
- Pushes up to elbows in prone

Referral Needed:

- No head extension in prone
- Lack of head control
- No leg extension in supported "stand"



Fine/Visual Motor (Daily Living Skills)

Milestones:

- Reaches for toys when offered close to baby or dangled in front of face
- Touches objects offered
- Plays with rattle
- Brings hands to midline/holds objects at midline
- Hands to mouth

Referral Needed:

- No interest in reaching for objects
- Hands remain fist
- Only one hand coming to midline or hands not coming to midline
- Not looking at objects/people

Feeding/Eating (OT)

Milestones:

- Maintains lip closure on bottle/breast without losing liquid
- Long sequences of suck/swallow/breathe
- Consumes at least 3 ounces per feeding (up to 8)
- Rhythmic chewing pattern noted on teethingers or objects

Referral Needed:

- Losing a lot of liquid from mouth/lips
- Fatiguing while eating to the point of not gaining weight
- Gagging/choking on liquid or gasping for air
- Lip or tongue tie issues/post-correction
- Eating less than 3 ounces per feeding
- Unable to eat from a bottle or breast
- On a NG or G-tube



Fine/Visual Motor (Daily Living Skills)

Milestones:

- Reaches with one hand
- Uses raking motion on pellet
- Reaches to pat reflection in mirror
- Attempts to hold bottle at least with one hand
- Grabs feet while supine
- Places objects in mouth
- Bangs objects on table

Referral Needed:

- Not reaching/attempting to grab objects
- Only uses one hand for object manipulation.
- Not holding objects in hand
- Not bringing hand to mouth or objects to mouth all times

6 MONTHS

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Feeding/Eating (OT)

Milestones:

- Consumes at least 4 ounces per feeding (up to 10)
- More variable munch (up and down) chewing pattern noted on teethers or objects and in response of food on gumline
- Lips begin to close on spoon when food is presented
- Level 1/smooth purees introduced

Referral Needed:

- All referral points from 2-4 months



Speech/Language/Social

Milestones:

- Moves eyes toward you when you speak
- Responds to changes in your voice
- Pays attention to music and songs
- Coos and babbles with you and when alone
- Giggles and laughs with you
- Makes sounds of pleasure and displeasure
- Sounds such as *pa*, *ma*, *duh*, *k*, and *g* should be present

Referral Needed:

- Does not seem to notice when others are speaking or orient head or body to noises
- Does not make eye contact when you are talking or playing
 - Does not play with sounds or does not make sounds

6 MONTHS

Gross Motor (PT)

Milestones:

- Rolls from prone to supine and back, over each shoulder
- Sits without support (or minor propping)
- Stands and bounces with support at trunk
- Rocks back and forth attempting to "crawl"

Referral Needed:

- Stiffness or tightness in any muscles
- Floppy muscle tone
- Lack of rolling



Fine/Visual Motor (Daily Living Skills) OT

Milestones:

- Releases objects intentionally
- Bangs objects together
- Reaches into container for object
- Emerging pincer grasp
- Able to move arm/hand to imitate wave

Referral Needed:

- Does not attempt to bang objects
- Not reaching/attempting to grab objects
- Not holding objects in hand
- Not bringing hand to mouth or objects to mouth
- Only uses one hand in object manipulation.

9 MONTHS

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Feeding/Eating (OT)

Milestones:

- Able to retrieve food from spoon when presented
- Tolerating Stage 1 and Stage 2 foods
- Tolerating thin and thick purees
- Exploring a sippy cup

Referral Needed:

- No interest in purees
 - Pushes solid food from the mouth/food or falls from mouth
 - Unable to transfer food to swallow
 - Gagging/choking on solids



9 MONTHS

Speech/Language/Social

Milestones:

- Turns head and looks in the directions of sounds and voices
- Turns when you call his/her name
- Starts to understand common words (e.g. mama, daddy, cup, milk, etc.)
- Responds to simple, routine phrases such as "No" or "Come here"
- Listens to songs or stories for a short time
- Starts to babble long strings of sounds together (e.g. babababa, dadada)
- Develops gestures such as waving hi/bye, reaching to be picked up, shaking head for no
- Points to objects and will look in the direction you point

Referral Needed:

- Limited or no babbling
- Does not respond to sounds or is inconsistent in responding to sounds
 - Does not make eye contact
 - Does not respond to name



Gross Motor (PT)

Milestones:

- Stands at edge of couch
- Gets self into sitting
- Pulls to stand
- Sits alone
- Crawls

Referral Needed:

- Does not bear weight through legs
- Does not pass toys across midline (hand to hand)
- Cannot sit

Speech/Language/Social

Milestones:

- Turns head and looks in the directions of sounds and voices
- Turns when you call his/her name
- Responds to simple, routine phrases such as "No" or "Come here"
- Listens to songs or stories for a short time
- Uses simple exclamations such as "Oh"
- First words appear around 10-15 months
- Non-repetitive babbling (e.g. ah dah, do guh guh, etc.)
- Vocal pitch sounds like adult speech

Referral Needed:

- Limited or no babbling
- Does not produce the consonants b, d, m, n
- Does not respond to sounds or is inconsistent in responding to sounds
 - Does not make eye contact
 - Does not respond to name

12 MONTHS

**As your child grows,
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developmental milestones.**

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Gross Motor (PT)

Milestones:

- Sits alone, reaching for toys
- Pulls to stand
- Cruises along furniture
- Begins to walk
- May stand without support

Referral Needed:

- Not crawling
- Not standing with support
- Loss of previously gained motor skills



Fine/Visual Motor (Daily Living Skills) OT

12 MONTHS

Milestones:

- Pushes/rolls ball
- Throws objects
- Assists with dressing (takes off, extends arms and legs)
- Attempts scribble following demonstration
- Attempts to stack blocks
- Turns thick pages of book
- Slides object like car on hard surface

Referral Needed:

- Doesn't bang objects together
- Unable to release objects from hands
- No reaching into container for objects
- No attempt to utilize pincer grasp

Feeding/Eating (OT)

Milestones:

- Able to bite into soft foods with slight assistance
- Able to move food from center of mouth to gumline
- Able to retrieve food from upper and lower lips
- Able to eat soft foods such as: avocado, banana, boiled soup ingredients (soft cubes)
- Able to eat soft foods such as: muffins, soft pastas, thin deli meats, scrambled eggs (soft mechanicals)
- Most liquids from cup

Referral Needed:

- Not tolerating any purees
- Not progressing past Stage 1 and Stage 2 foods
- Inactive lips/tongue/gumline while eating
- Gagging/choking on age appropriate foods



Speech/Language/Social

Milestones:

- Starts to identify basic body parts
- Follows some 1-step directions such as: "Roll the ball "or "Give it to me"
- Listens to simple stories and songs
- Produces the sounds p, b, m, n, t, d, h, w
- Uses a range of about 15-20 words
- Uses rote phrases such as: uh-oh and oh no
- Jargon, or nonsense words, begins around 12-15 months (sounds like adult speech but not very understandable)

Referral Needed:

- Limited sounds and/or not stringing sounds together
- Less than 5 words/word approximations
- Does not respond to name
 - Difficulty producing the above listed sounds

18 MONTHS

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Gross Motor (PT)

Milestones:

- Walks easily
- Climbs steps
- Begins to run
- Pulls a toy behind when walking

Referral Needed:

- Unable to walk
- Falls frequently more than 2 months after first independent steps



18 MONTHS

Fine/Visual Motor (Daily Living Skills) OT

Milestones:

- Brings utensils to mouth to feed
- Stacks 3+ blocks
- Hands objects to other people
- Pointing with index finger and thumb/other fingers tight to palm

Referral Needed:

- No attempt to grasp/manipulate objects
- Lack of more refined grasps (pincer, three-jaw chuck, using fingers)
 - No attempt to stack/roll/throw objects

Feeding/Eating (OT)

Milestones:

- Good lip closure noted during eating
- Able to eat soft table foods (two or more textures) in small bites (chicken nuggets, french fries, lasagna)
- Able to take bites of harder foods like cereals, pretzel sticks, hard cookies, Fritos, crackers, hamburger
- Manages liquids well while drinking (no coughing)
- Using an open mouth cup (with spilling)
- Mature chew patterns present

Referral Needed:

- Continues to only eat pureed food
- Gagging/choking on solid foods
- Still drinking from a bottle/unable to progress to cup



Speech/Language/Social

Milestones:

- Produces the sounds p, b, m, n, t, d, h, w
- Starting to put the ending sound on words (CVC words such as hot, yup, etc.)
- Using about 50-100 words, mainly nouns and simple verbs
- Starting to put two words together (mama go, want eat, big dog, etc.)
- Answers simple questions such as "Where is your coat?" Or "What's that?"
- Points to things you name when reading a book
- Follows 1-step directions such as "Roll the ball "or "Give it to me"
- Identifies basic body parts

Referral Needed:

- Does not follow simple directions
- Uses less than 20 words
- Not putting two words together
- Has a hard time producing the above listed sounds
- Has a hard time pointing to pictures or objects you name

24 MONTHS

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Gross Motor (PT)

Milestones:

- Stands on tiptoe
- Kicks ball
- Climbs onto furniture
- Walks up and down steps while holding on
- Throws a ball

Referral Needed:

- Does not walk safely
- Cannot mimic movements of others



Fine/Visual Motor (Daily Living Skills) OT

Milestones:

- Scribbles staying on paper/imitates circular pattern
- Stacks 6+ blocks
- Scoops from container with spoon and places in mouth with little spilling
- Twists knob to attempt to open door
- Turns paper pages in book
- Places large beads on string with assistance
- Reciprocal ball play

Referral Needed:

- No attempt to grasp/manipulate objects
- Lack of more refined grasps (pincer, three-jaw chuck, using fingers)
- No attempt to stack/roll/throw objects
- Lack of or poor utensil use

24 MONTHS

Feeding/Eating (OT)

Milestones:

- Drinking from a cup with easy lip closure and no spilling
- Consistent, repetitive chewing and moving food around the mouth with no pausing
- Mature chewing continues, managing larger pieces and more mixed-texture foods

Referral Needed:

- Continues to only eat pureed or very soft foods
- Not chewing
- Gagging/choking on solid foods
- Still drinking from a bottle/unable to progress to cup

