

DEVELOPMENTAL MILESTONES

Babies are fun. They make dramatic changes very quickly. Knowing what to expect is useful in selecting activities and toys that are appropriate to your child's developmental age. Remember, a preemie's age must be corrected to when the child should have been born. There is a lot of room for individual variation, so relax and enjoy! Here are some guidelines for the average baby.

Age range: 0 – 2 months

Language:

Observation: Baby is crying, cooing, gurgling. They can hear and see. Baby will make different sounds and different cries for their differing needs.

Activity: Talk to the baby. Giving back his particular sounds and elaborating on those sounds to stimulate imitation.

Social Skills:

Observation: Baby is interested in interacting with the environment. They prefer faces to inanimate objects and prefer female voices to male voices. They like contrasts such as black and white or bright red objects. The biggest social achievement now is the social or reciprocal smile.

Activity: Encourage eye contact and encourage visual exploration using the contrasts described above.

Fine Motor:

Observation: At first your baby does not have a lot of fine motor control. Hands will be opened most of the time. The obligatory grasp reflex will fade out as they approach two months, and they will develop a voluntary grasp.

Activity: Place small objects in the baby's hands and encourage the baby holding it. Introduce different textures for the child to explore.

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Gross Motor:

Observation: Baby will gain head control. Initial posture often reflects the in-utero positioning.

Activity: Hold the baby erect. Play with the baby by pulling to sit to stimulate head control. Try holding hands but if the head lags a lot, grasp child at the shoulders and bring them forward slightly while bringing to sitting from supine. Place the baby in a prone position (belly position) to encourage the baby to lift up their head and look around.

A note on over-stimulation: If the baby becomes irritable, avoids eye contact, cries excessively, flails their limbs, hiccups, sneezes, or continually turns their head away from you, they are saying that they have had enough. Respect that and give the child some quiet time.

Your pediatrician will be providing your baby with follow up care for routine care. For our very small or very sick NICU graduates, we offer developmental follow up care. A visit is recommended in ____ months. Please call the office to arrange an appointment.