

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: 6 – 8 months

Language:

Observation: There will be differential sounds for different people. Vowel-consonant blends such as “ba”, “da”, and “ma” appear.

Activity: Encourage strings of babbling consonant blends. Baby will enjoy singing and hearing you sing and will attempt to imitate you.

Social Skills:

Observation: Baby will begin to show separation anxiety. If you are out of the room or out of sight, you are gone. You will expect to see clinging behavior and crying.

Activity: Always speak to the baby when you are going out of the room and let them hear that voice so they know you are nearby. If you are going out, leave decisively. Don't keep coming back to comfort your child-you only prolong the agony of separation.

Fine Motor:

Observation: Your child is now transferring routinely and is working on picking up small objects.

Activity: Encourage playing with blocks and stimulate that hand to hand transfer. Permit access to small objects only with vigilant supervision as everything goes into the mouth! Cause and effect toys such as on-off buttons, light switches, and peek-a-boo are recommended.

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Gross Motor:

Your child can:

Independent sitting.

Sideways protective reflex.

Combat crawling.

You can:

Place in sitting position and gently but quickly tilt forward or sideways to encourage stable sitting.

If arms don't "shoot out" to sides to prevent falling when child is tilted to side, place hand on shoulder and move arm out to side. Encourage weight bearing on hand at end of movement.

Give child lots of floor time with objects a bit out of reach to encourage movement.

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.