

Developmental Checklist Birth to 3 Months

As a newborn, your baby needs you to hold him, rock him, sing and talk to him. They like to snuggle and hear your voice. You should go to your baby when he/she cries and see what is wrong. Don't worry about spoiling your baby. Babies cry because they need something: milk, a dry diaper, warmth or they may just be lonely or uncomfortable.

Things Babies May Do The First Three Months

- Focus eyes on objects about 12 inches away
- Raise head when lying on stomach
- Jump at loud sounds
- Make cooing sounds
- Watch own hands move
- Smile back when you smile
- Hold a rattle for a few minutes
- Laugh out loud
- Baby turns head towards a nipple or finger when cheek is stroked with it

Toys You Can Make or Buy

- Pictures of faces or black and white patterns to hang above the bed. Make sure you hang them high enough so that your baby will not get tangled or choke.
- An unbreakable mirror to tie on the side of the bed so babies can watch themselves.
- Small rattles that fit in baby's hand.
- Bright colored toys that you can tie across her bed for her to hit with her hands or kick with her feet.

Safety First!

- Handle your baby with care. Soft voices and gentle movements – even when your baby is crying are necessary for your baby to grow into a strong secure and alert child. Remember: When holding your baby, sudden jolts or jerking movements can harm your baby.
- If you use a bottle to feed your baby, be sure to thoroughly wash the bottle and nipple and to sterilize them before each use.
- Healthy infants should be placed on their back to sleep to help reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). Do this when your baby is being put down for a nap or to bed for the night.
- Car seats should be used at all times and should be rear-facing in the back seat until the child is both over one year of age and over twenty pounds.
- All homes should have working smoke detectors and fire extinguishers and a fire escape plan for the family.

New Experiences

- When you travel by car, be sure to put your baby in a rear facing infant seat that is buckled in the back seat of your car.
- Take the baby with you to your place of worship, the grocery store, or shopping so that he or she can see new people and places.

Health Hints

- Remember to take your baby to a doctor or nurse for a checkup to get the required shots. These "well baby checkups" are very important in order to keep your baby healthy.
- Immunizations at birth: Hep B # 1.
- Immunizations at 2 months: DTaP, Polio, HIB*, PCV** and Hepatitis B.
*HIB – prevents one type of meningitis
*PCV – prevents some types of pneumococcal disease

Nutrition Notes

- Relax and enjoy 15 to 30 minutes to feed your baby at every feeding. Wait until later to give your baby solid foods. Feeding babies solid foods early can cause allergies and choking. Babies sleep through the night because they are ready, not because they are given solid foods.

Things You Can Do Every Day to Help Your Baby Grow

- Gently stroke baby's fingers, hands, toes, arms, legs and feet with your fingertips. Remember, the human touch is miraculous. Your touch tells your baby that he or she is loved and that he is safe. Touch stimulates physical growth and brain development. It is essential for your baby.
- Sing, read or speak softly to your baby when you are holding him or her. You are building a feeling of security for your child that will serve him or her for the rest of his life.
- Tell your baby what you are doing when you are taking care of them: "I am changing your diaper." "Oh, let's wash your toes."
- Hold your baby in front of a mirror so that he or she can see himself and you. Talk to your baby as you both look in the mirror.
- Place a rattle in your baby's hand and see how long he or she can hold it. At first, it will be a very short time. Your baby will be able to hold onto the toy longer and longer as he or she gets older.
- Smile at your baby and look right into his or her eyes when you talk. You are letting your baby know that he or she is the most important person in the world.