

Healthy Baby Development and Behavior



Below are milestones most babies will reach between now and 6 months old. Talk with your doctor at your baby's next well-visit if your baby is not yet reaching these milestones or there are skills your baby no longer shows each day.

Social and Emotional Milestones

- Knows familiar people
- Likes to look in a mirror
- Laughs

Language and Communication Milestones

- Takes turns with you making sounds
- Blows "raspberries" (sticks tongue out and blows)
- Makes squealing noises

Thinking and Learning Milestones

- Puts things in mouth to explore them
- Reaches to grab a toy they want
- Closes lips to show they don't want more food

Physical Development Milestones

- Rolls from tummy to back
- Pushes up with straight arms when on tummy
- Leans on hands for support when sitting

Healthy Ways to Help Your Baby Learn and Grow

Development

- Smile, talk and respond positively to the sounds your baby makes.
- Sing and play music for your baby. Read together every day to help your baby learn language.
- Hold and cuddle your baby often, giving praise and lots of loving attention.
- Allow your baby to play with safe toys, such as rattles and cloth books with colorful pictures. Put your baby on their tummy for playtime. Your baby can practice kicking and reaching for toys.
- Remember to never leave your baby alone during tummy time. Don't allow your baby to sleep on their tummy.

Behavior

- If your baby becomes fussy, take a break from whatever you're doing and offer comfort. Help your baby learn to calm themselves by rocking, singing, sucking their fingers or a pacifier, or holding a favorite stuffed animal.

Feeding

- Feed your baby only breast milk or formula until 6 months old.
 - If breastfeeding, feed your baby on demand, usually 8–12 times in 24 hours. Give your baby vitamin D drops (400 IU a day). Continue to take your prenatal vitamins with iron and eat a healthy diet.
 - If formula feeding, feed your baby on demand, usually 6–8 times in 24 hours. Hold your baby so you can look at each other during feedings. Always hold your baby's bottle. Never prop a bottle.

Teeth

- Use a cold teething ring if your baby's gums are sore.
- Once your baby's first tooth appears, begin cleaning your baby's gums and teeth twice a day with a soft cloth or toothbrush. Use a small amount of fluoride toothpaste, no more than a grain of rice.
- Avoid giving your baby a bottle in the crib.

Sleep

- Create a schedule for naps and bedtime.
- Calm or rock your baby before bed until they are tired. It is good for babies to be drowsy when put down for bedtime, but allow them to fall asleep on their own.

- Remember the ABCs of safe sleep:
 - **Alone**—The safest place for your baby to sleep is alone in the crib/bassinet. It's good to have the crib/bassinet in the room where you sleep, but **don't let the baby sleep in your bed.**
 - **Back**—Always place your baby on its back to sleep to reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).
 - **Crib**—Always put your baby to sleep in an empty crib or bassinet with a snug, firm mattress and tight-fitting sheet. Don't have any blankets, crib bumpers, stuffed animals, toys or sleep positioners inside the crib with your baby. Learn more about safe sleep for infants. *Scan the QR code*

Vehicle Safety

- Use a rear-facing car seat in the back seat of your vehicle. Learn more about car seat safety and installation. *Scan the QR code*
- Never leave your baby alone in a car. Develop safe habits that prevent you from forgetting your baby in the car, like putting your purse or cell phone in the back seat. Learn more about the dangers of hot cars and how to keep your child safe. *Scan the QR code*

Home Safety

- Never leave your baby alone in the tub, near water or in high places like a changing table, bed or couch.
- Avoid drinking hot liquids while holding your baby. Prevent tap water burns by setting the temperature of your water heater to 120°F or below.

Find more useful, healthy tips for your family:

Cincinnati Children's Blog

Visit: blog.cincinnatichildrens.org

Young & Healthy Podcast

Listen on:



This information is meant to support your visit with your child's doctor. It should not take the place of the advice of your pediatrician.

Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention | *Bright Futures: Guidelines for Health Supervision of Infants, Children and Adolescents, 4th Edition* | American Academy of Pediatrics

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