

Developing Skills On Pace

Every baby develops at his or her own pace. However, there are certain skills that most babies acquire at around the same age. Don't worry if your baby doesn't do everything listed here or in the baby books. Regular checkups with your baby's doctor will reassure you that your little one's development is right on schedule!

BIRTH TO ONE MONTH

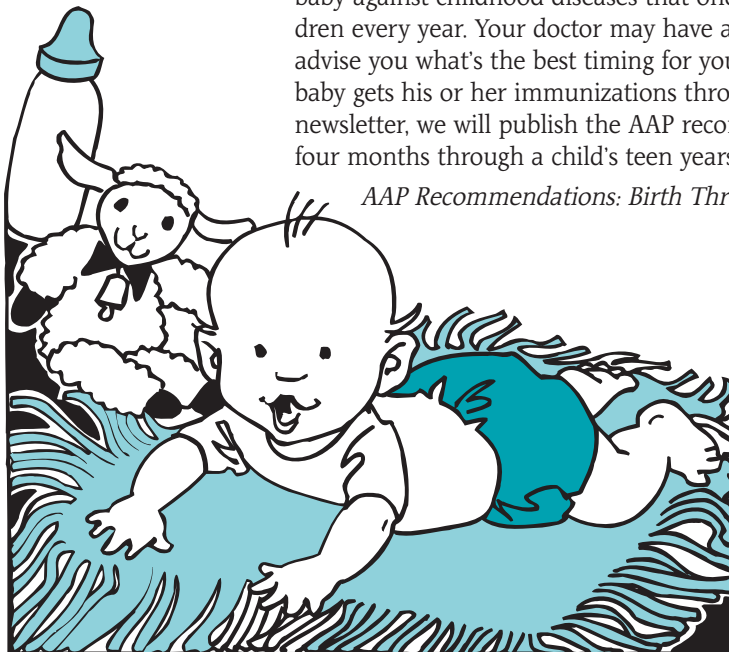
Baby will begin to:

- ♥ Know mother's voice.
- ♥ Respond to loud, sudden sounds by startling or crying.
- ♥ Move arms and legs briskly.
- ♥ May lift head briefly when placed on stomach.
- ♥ Focus eyes on objects 8 to 15 inches away.

SECOND MONTH

Baby will begin to:

- ♥ Smile in response to your smile.
- ♥ On stomach, may lift head and hold it up for longer periods.
- ♥ Follow an object – a toy or your face – as you move it up and down or side to side.
- ♥ Make some sounds other than cries: cooing, or gurgling.
- ♥ Hold head more steady when sitting upright on your lap.
- ♥ Now, or very soon, will be able to roll over.



Protecting Your Baby

Protect Your Baby Against Diseases.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends these dates for immunizing your baby against childhood diseases that once killed thousands of babies and young children every year. Your doctor may have a slightly different schedule. He or she will advise you what's the best timing for your child. But whatever you do, be sure your baby gets his or her immunizations throughout childhood. In upcoming issues of this newsletter, we will publish the AAP recommendations for further immunizations from four months through a child's teen years.

AAP Recommendations: Birth Through Two Months

BIRTH:

HBV (Hepatitis B Vaccine)

1-2 MONTHS:

HBV (Hepatitis B Vaccine)*

2 MONTHS:

DPT (Diphtheria/Pertussis/Tetanus) Shot

IPV (Inactivated Polio Vaccine)

HIB (Hemophilus B Vaccine)

Pneumococcal Vaccine

*Children whose mothers have tested positive for Hepatitis B, a liver disease that can lead to cancer in later life, are typically vaccinated at birth, at two months and at six months.

Check These Out!

Your public library has books, tapes and videos – all about parenting and child development. Use your library card to check out winners like these!

Music for babies – birth – 36 months (CD)

Great books for babies and toddlers: more than 500 recommended books for your child's first three years (B)

Listening to your newborn: a new approach to parenting your newborn. (B)

The baby book – everything you need to know about your baby – from birth to age two. (B)

The happiest baby on the block: The new way to calm crying and help your baby sleep longer. (V)

Begin with love: The first three months. (V)

(A) audiocassette, (B) book, (V) video,
(CD) music compact disc

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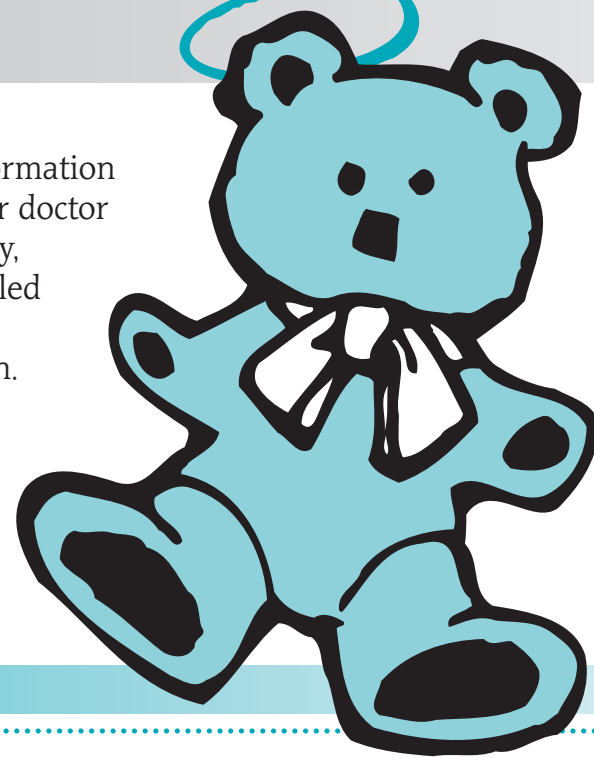
BIRTH

Congratulations on your new baby. If this is your first child, you may feel many emotions – pride and wonder, excitement and anxiety. If this child is the newest member of your growing family, you may also have special hopes and concerns.

Healthy Stages is designed to become a good friend to you and your baby. It contains special parenting and baby care reminders, tips and words of encouragement.

Always rely on your doctor. While the information we provide will be timely and helpful, your doctor is your best ally in efforts to raise a healthy, happy baby. Take your baby for all scheduled checkups. And contact your doctor if your baby is sick or concerns you for any reason.

Here's hoping you, baby and family will share a great deal of love, support and happy times as you pass through all of life's healthy stages!



The First Two Months

FIRST TOYS

- ♥ A colorful mobile securely attached to crib.
- ♥ Brightly colored and patterned pictures, placed so baby can see them while lying in the crib.
- ♥ Small, soft terry cloth, cotton, or rubber hand toys.
- ♥ Rattles and toys that squeak or make other funny (not loud or scary) sounds. Make sure toys have no eyes, buttons, or other parts that can come loose in baby's mouth and pose the risk of choking.

PLAYTIME

- ♥ Sit baby on your lap with head cradled and upright. Have a little talk. Keep your voice gentle, but vary it with high and low sounds. Try to get your baby to coo or gurgle at you. Move your head and eyes, and watch baby's eyes follow you. Let baby hold small, safe toys and rattles.
- ♥ Put several soft blankets or a pad on the floor. Put baby on it, and get down with him or her. Play peek-a-boo. Give baby plenty of room to kick and stretch.
- ♥ Sing to your baby. It doesn't matter whether it's a lullaby, a nursery rhyme, a love song, or a hymn. Your baby will think you're the world's greatest!

A Favorite Song

Millions of babies have laughed, cooed and clapped to this song. Newborns love watching the hand motions and hearing it sung.

The Itsy-bitsy spider went up the water spout.

(make a climbing motion with your thumbs and forefingers.)

Down came the rain and washed the spider out!

(Hold both hands out. Lower them while wiggling fingers for rain.)

Up came the sun and dried up all the rain.

(Raise hands above your head, like rays of the sun coming out.)

So the itsy-bitsy spider went up the spout again!

(Do the same climbing motion as at the beginning.)



Notes on Nurturing

Just What Is Nurturing

Healthy Stages was created to suggest ways of nurturing a child at specific stages of life. Just what is "nurturing"? Here are some ideas. You'll think of dozens of other ways to tell your baby, "I love you. I want you to grow up healthy. I want you to feel good about yourself." That's what nurturing is all about.

Nurturing is an attitude.

- ♥ It says "I'm the grown-up. This baby depends totally on me for life and all of life's needs."
- ♥ It says, "Parenting isn't easy. At times, I'll get tired or tense. But I'll never take it out on my child."
- ♥ It's resolving to grow as a parent by reading books, watching videos, taking classes and sharing ideas with other parents.

Nurturing is an action.

- ♥ It's establishing close ties to your baby's doctor.
- ♥ It's keeping appointments for check ups and immunizations.
- ♥ It's checking all risk and danger points in your baby's life to provide a safe environment.
- ♥ It's doing things to take care of yourself, because your well being is vital to your baby's future.
- ♥ It's setting up a daily schedule, a pattern of life that helps your baby sense a regular, consistent routine.

Nurturing is an emotion.

- ♥ It's remembering ways you were loved as a child and sharing them with your little one.
- ♥ It's remembering ways your feelings may have been hurt as a child and resolving not to pass on the hurt.
- ♥ It's giving yourself permission to respond with love to your baby's every cry, knowing love doesn't "spoil" a newborn.

Nurturing Yourself

Five Simple Stress Breaks

New parenthood is one of life's proudest and happiest times. Still, having a new baby can have its stressful moments. Try these ways to let go of tensions.

1. Exercise! Your doctor, hospital, or local library can provide guidelines for exercise. Your body will respond by feeling less tired. Any you'll find that exercise refreshes you mentally, too!
2. Rest! Stretch out while the baby naps in his or her crib. Even a few minutes with your eyes shut can relieve tension.
3. Relax! Every day, try to have some quiet time just for you, even if it's only 15 minutes. A spouse, trusted friend or family member might watch the baby while you take a soothing bath. Or maybe you'd rather curl up in an easy chair and read or listen to music.
4. Smile! At moments when you're most hurried, anxious or upset, stop and feel your forehead. Is it tightened into a frown? Breathe deeply several times, and break into a smile – even if you don't really feel like smiling. That "smile break" will ease tightened facial muscles. It could even help you avoid tension headaches!
5. Trust yourself! Is this your first baby? Don't let others overwhelm you with advice. Accept the support of those who help you without criticizing. Tell yourself, "I'm going to be a good parent." Your love and best efforts will make it so!



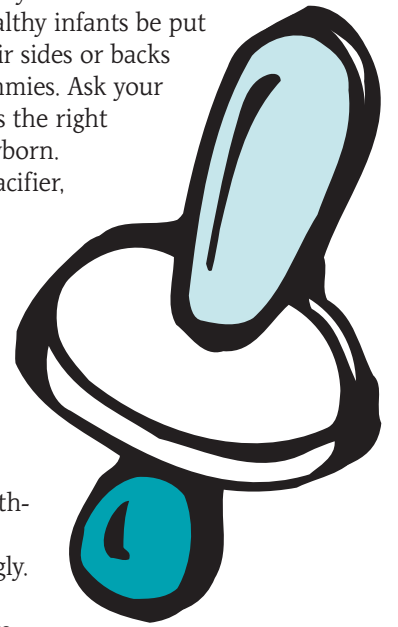
For Safety's Sake

Your Alertness Keeps Baby Safe

Your alertness and good parenting form the best defense in protecting your baby from harm. These tips will help you keep baby safe.

Baby's Room

- ♥ The American Academy of Pediatrics now recommends that healthy infants be put down to sleep on their sides or backs rather than their tummies. Ask your baby's doctor which is the right position for your newborn.
- ♥ If your baby uses a pacifier, don't tie it to a string attached to the crib. There's the risk of the baby getting tangled in the cord. Instead, buy several pacifiers and always keep a clean one handy.
- ♥ To avoid risks of smothering, make sure the crib mattress fits snugly.
- ♥ For the same reason, newborns should have no toys or pillows in the crib.



Around the House

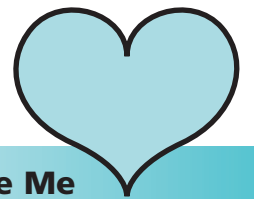
- ♥ Never leave your baby alone on a bed, chair, couch or changing table. Let the door bell or phone ring. Your baby's safety is more important than any caller or visitor.
- ♥ Always be in the room to supervise playful contact between the newborn and a young brother or sister.
- ♥ Install smoke detectors. Be sure they are in good operating condition.

On the Road

- ♥ Auto accidents kill and maim more children than all childhood illnesses combined. Make sure your newborn always rides in a properly installed car safety seat. Follow the manufacturer's directions for installation. Only seats manufactured since 1981 meet federal safety guidelines. Look for car seat checks frequently held in communities at schools, fire stations, and healthy baby fairs. Before each ride, see that seat belts and straps are snug and secure. If you don't have or can't afford a car safety seat, stop by any social services office and apply for their special assistance program.
- ♥ Place luggage, grocery bags, or other loose objects in the trunk. Don't put them near the baby, where they could cause injuries in an accident.
- ♥ Never leave your baby alone in an automobile. Car theft, brake failure and any number of other unforeseen problems could have tragic results.

Feeding Safety

- ♥ If you bottle-feed your baby, don't prop the bottle for baby to take alone. It's unfriendly. It can also be dangerous, as baby could choke on the milk flow.
- ♥ Babies need breast milk or formula only until 6 months of age according to the American Academy of Pediatrics. This is the best food for them to digest and use for growth and development.
- ♥ Babies will nurse more and eat more during growth spurts that occur around the ages of 1 week, 3 weeks, 6 weeks, 3 months and 6 months.
- ♥ Never use a microwave to heat a bottle.



How I Know You Love Me

If there's one thing I know in my short time on earth, it's that you love me. I see love in your face. Already, I know your eyes and smile. They greet my cries and quiet my fears. Yours is the face I long to see when I'm cold or hungry, wet or cranky. I hear love in your voice. How I love having you talk to me, coo with me, sing to me – even though I can't tell you so. I feel love in your touch. Your hands tell me I am loved when you pick me up to play, when you bathe me gently and tenderly, when you cuddle me to soothe my cries. I taste love when you feed me. Milk from breast or bottle keeps my body growing strong. And being held close to you feeds my spirit. All I know of love, I learn from you.