



Infant Development during the First 12 Months

The first year of life is one of the most critical stages in childhood development. From the moment they open their eyes, newborns undergo dramatic physical and mental changes.

During the first 12 months, infants should be examined regularly to determine proper development and identify any health problems. Early detection and treatment of potential problems are vital to a child's development. The following developmental milestones should be monitored during routine well-care exams with the appropriate specialists.

	Vision	Speech & Hearing	Physical	Emotional & Social
By 3 Months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tends to see objects about a foot away ▪ Follows moving objects and reaches for things 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sucks and swallows ▪ Quiets and smiles in response to sound or voice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pushes up on arms ▪ Lifts and holds head up 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Needs to be cradled and comforted ▪ Begins to develop trust in parents or caregivers
By 6 Months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Eye movement and eye/body coordination skills develop ▪ Both eyes should focus equally 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Uses consonant sounds in babbling ▪ Uses babbling to get attention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Uses hands to support self in sitting ▪ Rolls from back to tummy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Smiles broadly and laughs when pleased ▪ Develops self-calming skills to quiet down after being upset
By 9 Months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Eye/body coordination skills develop further ▪ Eye contact begins to replace physical contact 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increases variety of sounds and syllables ▪ Looks at familiar objects and people when named 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sits and reaches for toys without falling ▪ Moves from tummy or back into sitting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gets angry and frustrated when their needs are not met ▪ Begins to fear strangers
By 12 Months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Uses both eyes to judge distances 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Says "mama" and "dada" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pulls self up to stand ▪ Stands alone and takes independent step 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Expresses a variety of emotions such as fear, anger, dislike and happiness

Sources: American Academy of Pediatrics, American Optometric Association – Your Baby's Eyes Brochure, Invest in Kids