

DEVELOPMENTAL MILESTONES:

Your Child at Four Months



What are developmental milestones?

Developmental milestones are skills that are achieved by most children by a certain age. Developmental milestones include physical, social, emotional, cognitive and communication skills that are appropriate for the child's age. Milestones give important clues to a child's health and well-being. Any child who is delayed in their milestones should be further evaluated by a health or developmental professional.

- **Social and Emotional milestones** include how children learn about their own emotions and the emotions of others. These milestones also involve learning how to interact and play with other people.
- **Language and Communication milestones** involve language, speech, and nonverbal communication (for example, hand gestures or facial expressions). These milestones include a baby's babbling, first words, and even the art of listening to others and holding a conversation.
- **Movement/Physical development** involves both gross-motor skills and fine-motor skills. Gross motor skills are typically the first to develop. Gross motor skills include the ability to support their head, sit up, stand, crawl and walk. Fine-motor skills involve precise movements such as grasping a spoon, picking up small objects, and drawing.
- **Cognitive (learning, thinking, problem-solving) milestones** are centered on a child's ability to think, learn and solve problems. Cognitive milestones include an infant learning how to react to different facial expressions and a preschooler learning to say the alphabet.

As a parent, you spend the most time with your child and know them the best. If your child is not meeting these milestones for his or her age, or if you think there could be a problem with the way your child plays, learns, speaks, or acts, it is important to tell your health care provider so they can assess your child's development. Discuss any concerns with your primary care provider at your child's 4-month well child exam.

Your Baby at 4 Months Old

This is what most babies do at this age:

Social/Emotional

- Smiles spontaneously, especially at people
- Likes to play with people and might cry when playing stops
- Copies some movements and facial expressions, like smiling or frowning

Language/Communication

- Begins to babble
- Babbles with expression and copies sounds he hears
- Cries in different ways to show hunger, pain, or being tired

Cognitive (learning, thinking, problem-solving)

- Lets you know if he/she is happy or sad
- Responds to affection
- Reaches for toy with one hand
- Uses hands and eyes together, such as seeing a toy and reaching for it
- Follows moving things with eyes from side to side
- Watches faces closely
- Recognizes familiar people and things at a distance

Movement/Physical Development

- Holds head steady, unsupported
- Pushes down on legs when feet are on a hard surface
- May be able to roll over from tummy to back
- Can hold a toy and shake it and swing at dangling toys
- Brings hands to mouth
- When lying on stomach, pushes up to elbows

Tell your doctor if you notice any of these signs of developmental delay for this age. Every community should also have an early childhood intervention program that can help assess your child.

Reference and Resources

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones/index.html>
http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/pdf/parents_pdfs/developmentalscreening.pdf
<http://www.dars.state.tx.us/ecis/> (Texas Early Childhood Intervention services)

To refer a child to Texas Early Childhood Intervention Services for developmental evaluation and developmental support services, call: 1-800-628-5115

Child Neurology Consultants of Austin

6811 Austin Center Blvd. Suite 400, Austin, TX 78731
(512)494-4000
www.childneurotx.com



Child Neurology
Consultants of Austin