

DEVELOPMENTAL MILESTONES: Your Child at Nine 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 9-month well child exam.

Your Baby at 9 Months Old

This is what most babies do at this age:

Social/Emotional

- May be afraid of strangers
- May be clingy with familiar adults
- Has favorite toys

Language/Communication

- Understands "no"
- Makes a lot of different sounds like "mamamama" and "bababababa"
- Copies sounds and gestures of others
- Uses fingers to point at things

Cognitive (learning, thinking, problem-solving)

- Watches the path of something as it falls
- Looks for things he sees you hide
- Plays peek-a-boo
- Puts things in her mouth
- Moves things smoothly from one hand to the other
- Picks up things like cereal "O's" between thumb and index finger

Movement/Physical Development

- Stands, holding on
- Can get into sitting position
- Sits without support
- Pulls to stand
- Crawls

Tell your doctor if you are concerned that your child is not meeting milestones for this age.

Reference and Resources

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones/index.html>

<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

