



## Infant Developmental Skills

Birth - 3 months

4 - 7 months

8 - 12 months

Age	Mouth Patterns	Hand and Body Skills	Feeding Abilities
<b>Birth - 3 months</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has tongue thrust, rooting, and gag reflex</li> <li>• Begins to babble</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Needs head support</li> <li>• Brings hands to the mouth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinates the suck-swallow-breathe action while breast or bottle feeding</li> </ul>
<b>4 - 7 months</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transfers food from front to back of the tongue to swallow</li> <li>• Opens the mouth when sees spoon approaching</li> <li>• Begins to control the position of food in the mouth</li> <li>• Uses up-and-down munching movement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has head and neck control</li> <li>• Sits with support</li> <li>• Brings objects to the mouth</li> <li>• Begins to sit alone unsupported</li> <li>• Tries to grasp small objects such as toys and food</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Takes in a spoonful of strained/pureed/mashed food and swallows without choking</li> <li>• Drinks small amounts from a cup (with spilling) held by another person</li> <li>• Begins to eat mashed foods</li> <li>• Eats from a spoon easily</li> <li>• Begins to feed self with hands</li> </ul>
<b>8 - 12 months</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uses the jaw and tongue to mash food</li> <li>• Uses rotary chewing (diagonal movement of the jaw as food is moved to the side or center of the mouth)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sits alone easily</li> <li>• Easily grasps and/or brings small objects to the mouth, such as finger foods</li> <li>• Begins to hold a cup with two hands</li> <li>• Has good eye-hand-mouth coordination</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begins to eat ground/finely chopped/diced food and small pieces of soft, cooked table food</li> <li>• Bites through a variety of textures</li> <li>• Demands to spoon-feed self</li> </ul>

Nutrition during the first year of your baby's life is important for proper growth and development of oral and motor skills. These are general observations of infant developmental skills; however, each baby is different and may meet developmental skills earlier or later than his or her peers.



Birth - 3 months

4 - 7 months

8 - 12 months

# Infant Hunger and Satiety Cues

Age	Hunger cues	Satiety Cues
<b>Birth - 3 months</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opens and closes mouth</li> <li>• Brings hands to face</li> <li>• Flexes arms and legs</li> <li>• Roots around on the chest of whoever is carrying the infant</li> <li>• Makes sucking noises and motions</li> <li>• Sucks on lips, hands, fingers, toes, toys, or clothing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Slows or decreases sucking</li> <li>• Extends arms and legs</li> <li>• Extends/relaxes fingers</li> <li>• Pushes/arches away</li> <li>• Falls asleep</li> <li>• Turns head away from the nipple</li> <li>• Decreases rate of sucking or stops sucking when full</li> </ul>
<b>4 - 7 months</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Smiles, gazes at caregiver, or coos during feeding to indicate wanting more</li> <li>• Moves head toward spoon or tries to swipe food towards mouth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Releases the nipple</li> <li>• Seals lips together</li> <li>• May be distracted or pays attention to surroundings more</li> <li>• Turns head away from the food</li> </ul>
<b>8 - 12 months</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reaches for spoon or food</li> <li>• Points to food</li> <li>• Gets excited when food is presented</li> <li>• Expresses desire for specific food with words or sounds</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eating slows down</li> <li>• Clenches mouth shut</li> <li>• Pushes food away</li> <li>• Shakes head to say “no more”</li> </ul>

### Important Counseling Points

Babies use multiple cues together, or clustered cues, to convey their needs. They may bring their hands to their face, clench their hands, root, and make sucking noises. All these behaviors together help us know when a baby is hungry. A single cue alone does not necessarily indicate hunger or satiety.

Crying is not a cue, but rather a distress signal. Cues occur prior to crying. Watching and responding early to cues can help prevent crying. Hungry babies *might* cry, but they will *also* exhibit hunger cues noted above.