

## THREE- TO FOUR- MONTH TYPICAL DEVELOPMENT CHECKLIST (©Diane Bahr)

Place a check mark next to the characteristics you see in your three- to four-month-old baby

| Typical 3- to 4- Month-Old Baby                                                                                                       | YES | NO |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|----|
| <b>MOUTH/FEEDING DEVELOPMENT</b>                                                                                                      |     |    |
| Anterior tongue & Babkin reflexes seem to fade (3-4 months)                                                                           |     |    |
| Locates the breast nipple frequently without rooting reflex (3-6 months)                                                              |     |    |
| Controls gag reflex during mouthing & feeding experiences (4-6 months)                                                                |     |    |
| Has closed mouth & easy nose breathing during sleep & when mouth is inactive/empty                                                    |     |    |
| Rests tongue in the roof of the closed mouth to help maintain the broad palate shape                                                  |     |    |
| Is free of tethered oral tissues (tongue, lip, and/or cheek tie)                                                                      |     |    |
| Has good suck-swallow-breathe coordination (3-4 months)                                                                               |     |    |
| Sequences 20 or more sucks without a pause (different in breastfeeding than bottle feeding)                                           |     |    |
| May cough or choke occasionally (3-4 months)                                                                                          |     |    |
| Recognizes the bottle (3- 4 months)                                                                                                   |     |    |
| Pats bottle or breast with hand(s) at 3 to 4 months                                                                                   |     |    |
| Takes sips from an open cup held by the parent or care provider (4-6 months)                                                          |     |    |
| Uses increased lip control & movement (4-6 months)                                                                                    |     |    |
| Begins using jaw, lip, cheek, & tongue muscles independently                                                                          |     |    |
| Uses mostly generalized mouthing to explore appropriate toys & fingers                                                                |     |    |
| Brings an appropriate object to mouth around 4 months                                                                                 |     |    |
| <b>BODY DEVELOPMENT</b> (Typical 3- to 4- Month-Old Baby)                                                                             |     |    |
| <b>When on the Stomach</b> (Typical 3-Month-Old)                                                                                      |     |    |
| Rests arms symmetrically around the head                                                                                              |     |    |
| Lifts the head in the middle (midline) at 45- to 90- degree angles without bobbing                                                    |     |    |
| Shifts body weight from side-to-side as head moves to left or right & may roll to the side                                            |     |    |
| Visually tracks an object horizontally across 180 degrees while looking upward                                                        |     |    |
| Props & bears weight on forearms with elbows in line with or in front of the shoulders<br>( <i>crucial for shoulder development</i> ) |     |    |
| Lifts the chest & lowers the hips                                                                                                     |     |    |
| May make finger scratching movements or swimming motion with body & legs when seeing a toy                                            |     |    |
| Lowers head & shoulders when raising the hips (weight is shifted forward & minimal kicking occurs)                                    |     |    |
| <b>When on the Stomach</b> (Typical 4-Month-Old)                                                                                      |     |    |
| The flexion/bending part of the tonic labyrinthine reflex seems to disappear (become integrated by the brain)                         |     |    |
| Controls head/neck, spine, hips, & shoulders to lift head 90-degrees, lift chest, arch lower back, & place weight on the forearms     |     |    |
| Has front-to-back body movement, & pivots extended/stretched body to place weight on forearms                                         |     |    |

|                                                                                                                                                                    |  |  |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|--|
| Maintains propped/lifted body position when head/neck are bent downward (flexed) contributing to abdominal muscle & rib cage development, as well as hip stability |  |  |
| Rolls from stomach to side with weight shift                                                                                                                       |  |  |
| Has increasing eye muscle control related to head control; visual attention leads head & eye movements                                                             |  |  |
| Alternates between extending & bending legs to develop hip, leg, knee, & ankle muscles                                                                             |  |  |
| <b>When Lying on Each Side of the Body</b> (Typical 4-Month-Old)                                                                                                   |  |  |
| The flexion/bending part of the tonic labyrinthine reflex seems to disappear (become integrated by the brain) around 4 months                                      |  |  |
| Demonstrates a good balance of bending & extending body when lying on each side ( <i>significant developmental milestone</i> )                                     |  |  |
| Develops rib cage shaping/contouring by bearing/supporting body weight against gravity along with the pull/action of the oblique abdominal muscles                 |  |  |
| Develops side bending with new head positions                                                                                                                      |  |  |
| <b>When on the Back</b> (Typical 3-Month-Old)                                                                                                                      |  |  |
| Moro/Startle reflex begins to disappear (become integrated by the brain) between 3 & 6 months                                                                      |  |  |
| Has head close to or in midline (middle of body), & begins to tuck chin toward chest & look downward                                                               |  |  |
| Rotates head from side-to-side while lengthening back of neck; may turn body onto side                                                                             |  |  |
| Looks at a toy in midline/middle with increasing attention, & may swipe at it                                                                                      |  |  |
| Visually follows a toy/face horizontally from side-to-side                                                                                                         |  |  |
| Typically has hands open with wrists & fingers spread                                                                                                              |  |  |
| Shows increase in hands & eyes working together (eye-hand coordination)                                                                                            |  |  |
| Demonstrates increase in moving just enough for an activity (grading) & moving one body part separate from another (dissociation)                                  |  |  |
| Brings hands to the body in an increasingly coordinated manner, & begins to gain control over palmer grasp reflex                                                  |  |  |
| Uses hands with increasing intention to explore own mouth, body, clothing, & care-providers (body awareness/touch experiences)                                     |  |  |
| Often has feet together for body awareness/touch experience (frog-legged position)                                                                                 |  |  |
| Stretches hip, leg, knee, & ankle muscles when moving legs                                                                                                         |  |  |
| <b>When on the Back</b> (Typical 4-Month-Old)                                                                                                                      |  |  |
| Moro/Startle reflex seems to disappear (become integrated by the brain) between 3 & 6 months                                                                       |  |  |
| The flexion/bending part of the tonic labyrinthine reflex seems to disappear (become integrated by the brain) around 4 months                                      |  |  |
| The asymmetric tonic neck reflex seems to disappear (become integrated by the brain) between 4 & 6 months                                                          |  |  |
| Moves trunk/core as a unit in slight bending & extending/stretching related to abdominal & hip movements (lowers spine & lifts hips)                               |  |  |
| Maintains head in midline/middle with tucked chin & elongated neck; neck & shoulder stability needed for tongue & jaw development/movement                         |  |  |
| Looks downward when lowers chin                                                                                                                                    |  |  |

|                                                                                                                                                                                     |  |  |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|--|
| Moves head toward side of sound and/or visual stimulation                                                                                                                           |  |  |
| Body follows head movement to roll body to the side                                                                                                                                 |  |  |
| Follows & fixes eyes on objects without head movement                                                                                                                               |  |  |
| Moves arms & legs actively, symmetrically, & in synchrony                                                                                                                           |  |  |
| Brings hands to middle of body & other body parts developing body awareness, hand use, & beginning eye-hand coordination for reaching & grasping                                    |  |  |
| Reaches toward toys, & holds lightweight toys placed in hands                                                                                                                       |  |  |
| Bang, shakes, & brings appropriate toys to mouth with hands                                                                                                                         |  |  |
| Mouths appropriate toys <i>discriminating shape, size, &amp; texture</i> (typifies/assists mouth & tongue sensation/awareness used in future feeding, eating, drinking, and speech) |  |  |
| Kicks legs with increasing coordination stretching hip, leg, knee, ankle, & toe muscles                                                                                             |  |  |
| Shifts weight to side when foot placed on opposite knee, & can roll to side with flexion/bending                                                                                    |  |  |
| Foot-on-foot play & pushing with the feet increases body awareness                                                                                                                  |  |  |

### Primary References

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