

Activity

It's important that you encourage your baby to move and enjoy lots of active play. Watching TV, using a tablet or being strapped into a buggy, car seat, highchair, baby bouncer, jumperoo or baby walker for long periods is not recommended for children. Giving your child the chance to get active and burn off energy can help develop their muscles and bones, as well as improve their co-ordination skills and how well they sleep.

Before your baby begins to crawl, you can still encourage them to be physically active:

- The best place for your baby to develop their strength and movement skills is playing on the floor so that they can move freely and explore a safe environment.
- Supervised play on their tummy with toys to reach for nearby. Little and often is best when they're very young.
- Playing pulling, pushing, and grasping games. These are great ways to practice different kinds of movements.
- Taking them swimming. Babies can go swimming any time after their first set of vaccinations

If you have any concerns about your child not reaching some of the milestones you may want to contact your health visitor or GP for advice.

Contact Details

For further information and advice please visit our Website:

www.poole.nhs.uk/physio and find '[childrens physiotherapy](#)'



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Information for parents and children about....

Normal Development



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This information sheet focuses on children's physical development and developmental milestones. But what does this mean?

Development is the acquisition of skills in all aspects of the child's life

Physical development: this refers to the body increasing in skill and performance and includes:

- Gross motor development (using large muscles), for example legs and arms
- Fine motor development (precise use of muscles), for example hands and fingers.

Developmental Milestones: Skills such as your baby sitting up on their own and taking their first step are called developmental milestones. They also refer to the age at which most children will have reached a certain skill in their development. Some children will move quickly from one milestone to the next e.g. standing to walking along whereas others make take several months to do so.

Average age: This is the middle of the range of ages when all children reach a certain stage, for example, for walking the range can be from 10 months to 18 months which makes the 'average' age for walking 14 months.

Physical Developmental Milestones

These milestones are a general description of what most children can do at certain ages. The important thing to remember is that *all* children develop at different rates and may be earlier in achieving some aspects of development and later in others:



Activity	Typical Children	
	Average Age	Range
Lifts head during tummy time	8 weeks	4-12 weeks
Rolls over	5 months	2-10 months
Sits alone	7 months	6-8 months
Crawling	11 months	9-12 months
Pulls to stand	11 months	9-12 months
Walks Alone	14 months	10-18 months

Normal Variants

Not all children will do things in the same way and some children may miss out certain activities or skills altogether.

For example, not all children will learn to crawl on their hands and knees, some will prefer to commando crawl (move on their tummies) and some may even move on their bottom using one or both legs or hands to propel themselves when they are sitting – this is called bottom shuffling. These are normal variants of crawling.

Why do the first months and years matter so much?

An important aspect of the very young brain is its capacity for change and learning. The time you spend playing together gives your child lots of different ways and times to learn and develop.

Play also helps your child:

- Feel loved, happy and safe
- Build confidence
- Develop social skills, language and communication
- Learn about caring for others and the environment
- Develop gross motor and fine motor skills
- Connect and refine pathways in the brain.
- Development their bond with you