



# Infant Ages and Stages

## Physical

|                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Weight</b>            | Infants gain one to two pounds per month in the first six months and one pound per month in the second six months. The average weight of a one-year-old infant is 20-22 pounds; however, individual infant weight may differ depending on heredity and feeding habits.                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Height</b>            | The average newborn is 20 inches long. By one year, the average infant is about 30 inches tall. Heredity more strongly influences height than weight.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Proportion</b>        | An infant's head and abdomen are large in comparison to the rest of the body. The head grows rapidly during the first year to provide room for the developing brain. Over half the total growth of the head occurs during the first year. The skull of a newborn has spaces called "fontanel" which are gaps where bones have not yet joined. These allow the head to grow, and they close around the age of 18 months.                              |
| <b>Sight</b>             | A newborn's eyesight is blurry right after birth. Within a week, the newborn's awareness of his or her surroundings grows. In the second month, infants begin to show depth perception, and can recognize three-dimensional objects. By the third month, they prefer real objects, not pictures. Hand-eye coordination continues to improve throughout the first year.                                                                               |
| <b>Hearing</b>           | Hearing develops before the infant is born. At birth, a newborn can recognize where a sound is coming from. Infants respond better to soothing sounds than to loud sounds.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Smell &amp; Taste</b> | Research has shown that within 10 days of birth an infant can distinguish by smell, his or her mother from another person. Research also shows that infants can taste the difference between sour, salty, and sweet; infants prefer sweet. Infants use their mouths to learn about their environment during the first year. Because they will put anything into their mouths, caregivers need to be careful about what is within the infant's reach. |

## Intellectual

|                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>1-2 months</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Follows moving objects with eyes</li> <li>Cries to indicate needs</li> <li>Distinguishes between familiar and unfamiliar voices</li> <li>Prefers faces to objects</li> <li>Uses senses to gain information</li> </ul>                                                             |
| <b>3-4 months</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Swipes at objects; grasps objects that touch hand</li> <li>Makes sounds</li> <li>Interested in own hands and feet</li> <li>Recognizes caregivers' faces; distinguishes between familiar and unfamiliar faces</li> <li>Responds when caregiver talks</li> </ul>                    |
| <b>5-6 months</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plays peek-a-boo</li> <li>Studies objects carefully</li> <li>Recognizes own name</li> <li>Makes sounds to indicate pleasure and displeasure</li> <li>Looks for objects that are dropped</li> <li>Reaches for objects and grasps them with entire hand</li> </ul>                  |
| <b>7-8 months</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Imitates actions of others</li> <li>Begins to understand cause and effect</li> <li>Sorts objects by size</li> <li>Solves simple problems</li> <li>Recognizes some words</li> <li>Babbles to imitate speech</li> <li>Remembers things</li> <li>Smiles at self in mirror</li> </ul> |



|                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|---------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>9-10 months</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obeys simple commands or directions</li> <li>• Says a few words</li> <li>• Responds to some words</li> <li>• Plays pat-a-cake</li> <li>• Searches for hidden objects</li> <li>• Handles medium-sized objects skillfully</li> </ul>            |
| <b>11-12 months</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognizes many words</li> <li>• Likes picture books</li> <li>• Fits blocks inside one another</li> <li>• Knows parts of the body</li> <li>• Uses some words regularly</li> <li>• Picks up small objects with thumb and forefinger</li> </ul> |

## Emotional

|           |                                                                                                   |
|-----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 month   | Makes eye contact; cries for help; responds to parents' smiles and voices                         |
| 2 months  | Smiles at people; watches and enjoys playing with people; expresses anger                         |
| 3 months  | Smiles back at people, involving whole body (i.e., arms lift, hands open, legs move)              |
| 4 months  | Laughs out loud; likes to be entertained; cries if play is disrupted                              |
| 5 months  | More assertive                                                                                    |
| 6 months  | Obvious temperament (i.e., easygoing or easily upset, active or gentle)                           |
| 7 months  | Strongly expresses anger                                                                          |
| 8 months  | Shy or anxious with strangers; cries when frustrated or afraid                                    |
| 9 months  | Smiles at own image in mirror; prefers to be near parent; sensitive to presence of other children |
| 10 months | Separation anxiety; development of self-esteem; expresses moods (i.e., sad, happy, angry)         |
| 11 months | Tries to gain approval and avoid disapproval; may be uncooperative                                |
| 12 months | Temper tantrums; development of sense of humor                                                    |

Infants show affection for caregivers first, others second.

## Social

|              |                                                                                               |
|--------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 month      | Stops crying when held or touched; face brightens when sees familiar faces                    |
| 2 months     | Smiles at people; watches people                                                              |
| 3 months     | Turns head in response to a voice; wants companionship as well as physical care               |
| 4 months     | Laughs out loud; likes to be entertained                                                      |
| 5 months     | Increased interest in family members other than parents; babbles; may cry when alone          |
| 6 months     | Loves company and attention; likes peek-a-boo games                                           |
| 7 months     | Prefers parents over other family members or strangers                                        |
| 8 months     | Prefers to be with other people; may crawl looking for company                                |
| 9-10 months  | Likes repetitive games (i.e., drop the toy and have someone pick it up)                       |
| 11-12 months | Friendly and happy; tolerant of strangers; sensitive to other's emotions; center of attention |

An upset infant needs to be soothed, but a content infant also needs attention. Take time to hold and cuddle the infant. Carry him or her around as you walk. Respond to the infant's babbling or noises with talking and smiling. Let the crawling infant explore in a safe environment, outside of a playpen if possible.