

# Infant Milestones & Care: 4 to 7 Months

*“Gionni” ‘Over here’.*

Babies perform dozens of brand-new feats in their first year of life. For seven-month old Gionni Manzella these last twelve weeks, alone, have been a marathon.

*“Gionni found his feet. He’s bringing them to his mouth. You can see him playing with his hands. He’ll be able to pass something from one hand to the other. If he drops something on the floor, he’s looking for it. He recognizes us when we walk into the room. A lot of exciting firsts.”*

*“Are ya thinking about it? There ya go!”*

*“All good stuff. This has been a big jump. Four to seven months has been a big jump.”*

Gionni’s “big jump,” and that long list of firsts are much more than a source of pride for mom and dad. They’re milestones that are essential to normal development.

*“Milestones are typical age expectations for the early motor skills, language skills and social skills that we expect of infants.”*

*“Get it, get it, get it. Yay, Gionni!”*

In fact, between four and seven months is the period in your baby’s first year when the most, and the most important, developmental changes happen. These include: Using the legs to support his or her entire weight; Reaching with one hand; Exploring with hands and mouth; Responding to his or her name; Babbling consonants; Distinguishing emotions by tone of voice.

*“Between four and seven months, I want to see a little bit more action. I’d like to see engagement of the tummy muscles, as well; maybe a little bit of rocking; getting up on all fours. Certainly, the social aspect and the speech aspect, I want to see more. I want to see tracking from side to side. I want the mom to come into the room and start to talk, and the baby say, “Oh, where is that sound coming from?”*

*“There’s a smile. We love that, Gionni. Yes, good boy.”*

It’s normal for parents to worry when their baby doesn’t seem to reach a milestone on time. Nicolle and Victor have had their fair share of concerns.

*“We noticed that Gionni wasn’t holding his head up all the way. His neck seemed a little weak, and he wasn’t able to keep control over his head. So, we tried to wait it out. We spoke to the pediatrician. And within a couple of weeks, he was able to have the strength to hold his head up.”*

Dr. Andrew Adesman says the action Nicolle and Victor took is exactly what parents should do if they’re sensing a potential delay.

*“There are things that perhaps you may observe or have noticed as a parent who’s with your child every day that perhaps may not be evident at the time of the well-child visit. And so that’s the time to just raise any of the concerns. Or write down questions, come to the visit organized, and so this way you can leave that visit feeling as reassured that your pediatrician understands your child and understands whatever concerns you may have.”*

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There are some cues to watch for which could be signs of potential developmental delay, for example, if your baby: Physically: Seems very stiff, with tight muscles or, the opposite: very floppy; Cannot sit with help by six months.

Socially and Emotionally: Refuses to cuddle; Shows no affection for a caretaker. And Cognitively: Does not turn head toward sounds by four months; Does not try to attract attention through actions by seven months.

Gionni is Nicolle and Victor's second child. And Nicolle admits they've learned to think of milestones differently this time around.

*"I started to realize that instead of stressing out about those moments, they will get there when they are ready, and just want to enjoy the joys of motherhood."*

*"I've learned that babies reach their milestones at their own pace; and when he does, just be excited and be happy that they're getting there."*