

Infant Milestones and Care: By 4 Months

As your baby grows, they will have a lot of “firsts”—their first smile, first laugh, first steps. These are called developmental milestones. And they can help tell you if your baby is healthy and growing up well.

Keep in mind, milestones are not fixed. All babies develop at their own pace. But by knowing the milestones, you can spot a problem early if it arises. Follow this checklist to recognize milestones.

By 4 months of age, most babies will do the following: Try to get your attention by:

Smiling or looking at you; Moving or making sounds; And chuckling at your attempts to make them laugh.

DO: Tell you they are hungry by opening their mouth when they see a breast or bottle.

DO: React to your voice by making sounds back, such as cooing, or turning their head toward you.

DO: Hold a toy or swing at one with their arms.

DO NOT: Wait to talk with your child’s healthcare provider if your baby does not do these things. Also note if your baby: Has trouble holding their head steady without help; Does not look at or bring their hands to their mouth; Or has trouble pushing themselves up on their elbows when on their stomach.

These could be signs of a delay in development. Your child’s healthcare provider can test your baby’s progress.

In most cases, missing a milestone turns out not to be a problem. But being vigilant can help you act on any concerns quickly. Follow this checklist to make sure your baby grows up healthy and happy.