

What are gross motor skills?

Gross motor skills are movements that we do with our legs and large body muscles. Gross motor skills:

- Are signs that your baby or toddler is developing skills involving the large muscles.
- Follow certain patterns and stages for most children.
- May happen at slightly different times for each child.

What gross motor skills should my child have?

Some key gross motor skills that are usual for babies and toddlers are listed in the chart below.

Child's age	Usual gross motor skills
Birth to 4 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Raises head when on their stomach• Turns head to both sides• Kicks both legs
6 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pushes up on hands when on their stomach• Rolls over (stomach to back and back to stomach)• Has improved head control• Sits and supports his weight with their hands• Stands on feet with support
9 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sits by themselves with hands free• Crawls• Pulls up to standing position
12 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stands for a short time by themselves• Walks with or without help• Sits down by themselves• Lowers self to sit from standing
18 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stands up by themselves• Picks objects off the floor• Steps up when holding a rail or hand
2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jumps with both feet• Runs• Throws and kicks a ball• Walks up and down stairs

In case of an urgent concern or emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department right away.

Gross motor skills, continued

Child's age	Usual gross motor skills
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Balances on 1 foot• Walks up stairs with alternating feet• Catches a ball• Pedals a tricycle
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hops on 1 foot• Walks backward on a line• Has improving balance• Walks down stairs with alternating feet

Why causes a delay in gross motor skills?

A delay in gross motor skills can be caused by several things. One of the common causes is a delay in development. Doctors do not always know what causes this, but 5 main causes may include:

- Genetic conditions (passed from parent to child through the genes)
- Exposure to drugs or toxins
- Lack of practice of new motor skills
- Prematurity (born early)
- Lack of tummy time play

Where can I get help?

If you think your child has big delays in gross motor skills:

- Call your child's doctor right away. Your child may need some tests to find the cause. The sooner your child gets help, the sooner something can be done to help with the problem and prevent more delays.
- If you have any other questions or concerns about your child's gross motor skills, talk with the doctor. You may also call the Rehabilitation department at Children's Healthcare of Atlanta at this phone number: _____.

Therapist: _____ Date: _____

This teaching sheet contains general information only. Talk with your child's doctor or a member of your child's healthcare team about specific care of your child.

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