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The building blocks to achieving great physical development for infants with Down syndrome



Encouraging and supporting a child's physical development is like building a house. We recommend you follow these stages to ensure solid foundations are created on which to build. We know that houses are built to a high standard if the proper guidance is followed, and people are patient.

There may be delays and things may not go as planned but hard work and dedication always pay off eventually. There are often temptations to cut corners, to perhaps bypass 4-point crawling and go straight to walking but we do recommend following each of the developmental stages. When your little one is up and running around, the delays and hard work will be forgotten, and you can enjoy the rewards of a well-built project! Babies and infants with Down syndrome will develop physically at different ages, so ages are provided as a guide only.

Created in collaboration with Carn Physiotherapy

START ➡

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Physical developmental stages

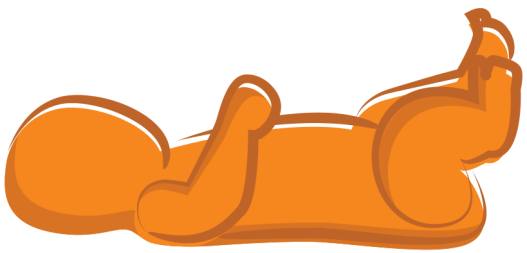


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Stage 1: Foundation

AGE GUIDE:

Birth to 6 months



No head control in any position.

No chin tuck when pulled to sit.

Tummy time is not well tolerated.

Resting posture on back will be knees apart with soles of feet turned inwards.

Movements will be jerky with arms more active than legs.

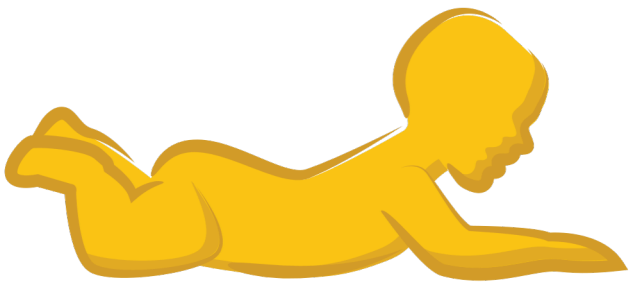
NEXT STAGE

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Stage 2: Initial Building Blocks

AGE GUIDE:

6-12 months



- # Lifts head 1-2 seconds in tummy time.
- # Able to prop briefly on forearms in prone.
- # Lifts head and attempts to look both directions on their tummy.
- # Rolls from their side to their back.
- # May show early reflexive rolls from tummy to back.
- # Bring hands together from sides into midline over chest or chin.
- # Able to pick up a toy and pass to other hand.
- # Able to pull to sit with minimal head lag.
- # Able to hold head steady when supported in sitting.

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Stage 3: First Fix stage

AGE GUIDE:

12-18 months



- # Able to raise head from pillow when lying on back to reach for feet.
- # Able to prop with extended arms and hands flat in prone.
- # Able to pivot around on floor to reach for toys.
- # Able to roll from tummy to back and sometimes from back to tummy.
- # May be starting to push backwards or commando crawl.
- # May be able to sit unsupported for short periods.
- # Able to play with a toy with both hands.

NEXT STAGE ➡

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Stage 4 Second Fix stage

AGE GUIDE:

18-24 months



- # Able to play in tall kneeling position.
- # Able to attempt 4 point crawling.
- # Able to pull to stand.
- # Able to transition from sitting to lying.
- # Able to squat down to floor if holding on to support.
- # Cruising furniture.

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Stage 5
Turn key finish

AGE GUIDE:

24-48 months



Independent steps with appropriate support.

Leads to being independently mobile with good gross motor skills.

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Snagging List aka Fine tuning

AGE GUIDE:

Any age



Working on balance and co-ordination.

Ball skills - Throwing/catching/ kicking

Jumping.

Steps/stairs.

Any renovations or additions can be looked at in later years!

NEXT

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