



ZERO TO THREE
Early connections last a lifetime



Week 1 **YOUR AMAZING BABY**

From the very first day, your baby's brain is growing and changing quickly. Every moment matters.

What your baby can do

Your newborn is taking in everything around them! Even when they are asleep or seem unaware, their brain never fully turns off. They notice when you look at them, smile at them, or raise your voice. All of these moments help shape their growing brain.

Your baby also loves back-and-forth connection. When you talk or make sounds, they may respond, then turn away for a short break before coming back. This back-and-forth is like a game of catch. It is one of the earliest ways babies learn to communicate.

A newborn can't control their facial muscles yet, so they can't smile on purpose yet. It takes about 4 to 8 weeks for babies to learn how to smile. If your baby is not smiling, that is completely normal. That first real smile is coming, and it will be worth the wait.

What you can do

You cannot spoil a newborn, so it's okay to go to your baby when they cry. **Your baby cannot soothe themselves yet.** When you soothe them, you are teaching them how to soothe themselves over time.

It is hard to soothe a baby when you are stressed. **If you're stressed, take a moment to get calm.** If you are feeling overwhelmed, it is okay to place your baby safely on their back and take a short break.

Put screens away when you can. Babies learn from being with people, not from TV or phones. Even a few minutes of quiet, face-to-face time makes a big difference.



What you can do

Follow the ABCs of safe sleep until your baby is a year old:

Alone. Babies should sleep by themselves. No blankets, pillows, toys, or other people sharing the bed. These increase the danger of suffocation.

Back. Place your baby on their back to sleep, every nap, every night.

Crib. Babies should sleep on a firm mattress or in a bassinet. If your baby falls asleep in their car seat, stroller, or baby swing, move them to their crib as soon as you can. Don't sleep on a couch or soft armchair with your baby.

Keep the home peaceful. Anger, conflict, and too much stress are hard on a newborn's growing brain. A calm, loving home supports healthy development from day one.

Every child grows at their own pace. Your baby may reach milestones faster or slower than other babies and still be growing just fine.

At this visit

The care team will measure your baby's length, weight, and head size, and they will check your baby's heart, eyes, ears, nose, and mouth. The team will talk with you about your baby's development, sleep, eating, and safety, and there will be time for any questions or concerns you have.

What comes next

In the coming weeks, your baby will become more alert and more tuned in to your face and voice. Around 4 to 8 weeks, you can expect that first real smile, which is a sign that your baby knows who you are and is starting to bond with you. Keep talking, singing, and responding to their cues. Every moment is helping their brain grow.

Have more questions?

Talk to your baby's healthcare provider or one of the professionals supporting your family.

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