



GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT – PART A

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Thank you Missah! Welcome to the second lesson about child growth and development from infancy through adolescence. We'll discuss the physical, cognitive, and emotional growth that happens at every stage of a child's life. As a result, giving you some insight to better handle the nature of your call.

Good Studying

Infancy | Physical Development

- Starts from the head
- Turns head on the left to right
- Hands are fisted
- Arms are flexed
- Can grasp the finger of an adult
- Sucks when the mouth touches the nipple
- Sleeps for 16 hours a day
- Neck is not strong



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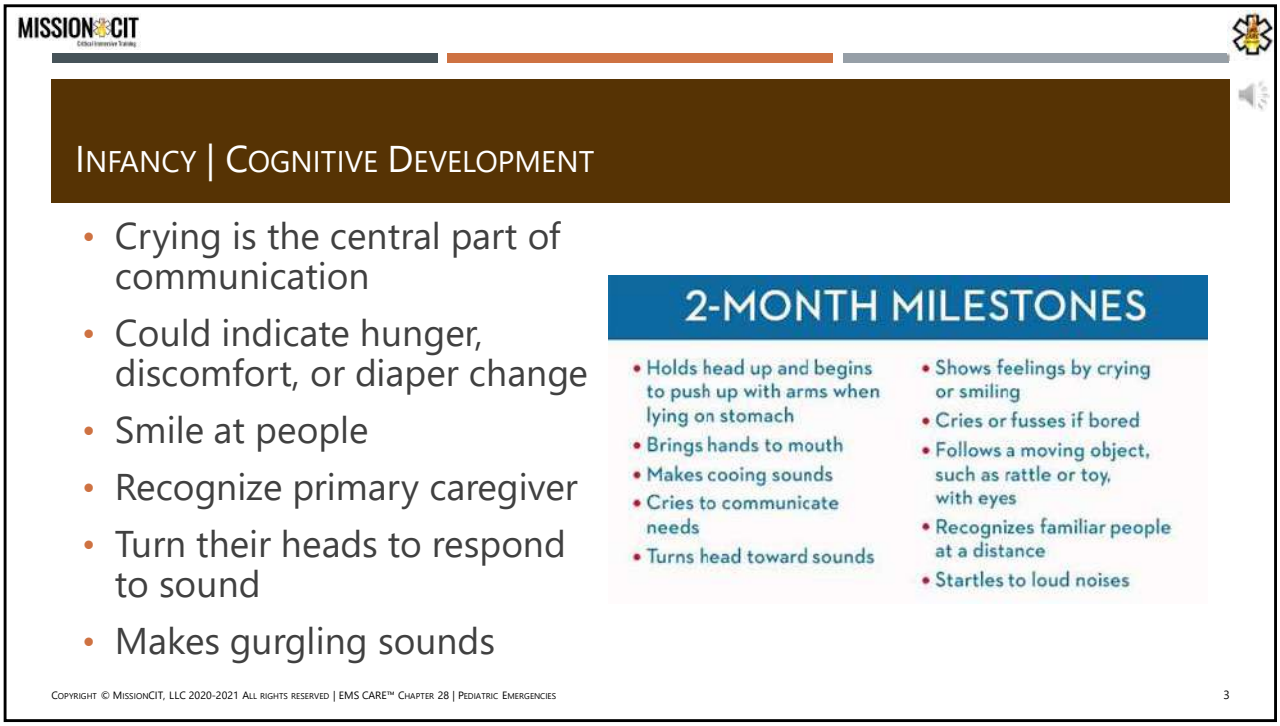
One of the most important things to understand is that an infant's physical development starts from the head and moves down to the other parts of the body.

During the first two months of birth, infants tend to gaze at other faces and turn their heads from left to right, and vice-versa while lying on their back. The hands are fisted and the arms are flexed, and the baby can firmly grasp the finger of an adult.

The infant can suck milk as soon as its mouth touches the nipple.

The neck is not strong enough to hold the head, so pulling up to a sitting or standing position is not recommended.

More importantly, they tend to sleep for about 16 hours a day, as this is what enables them to grow quickly.

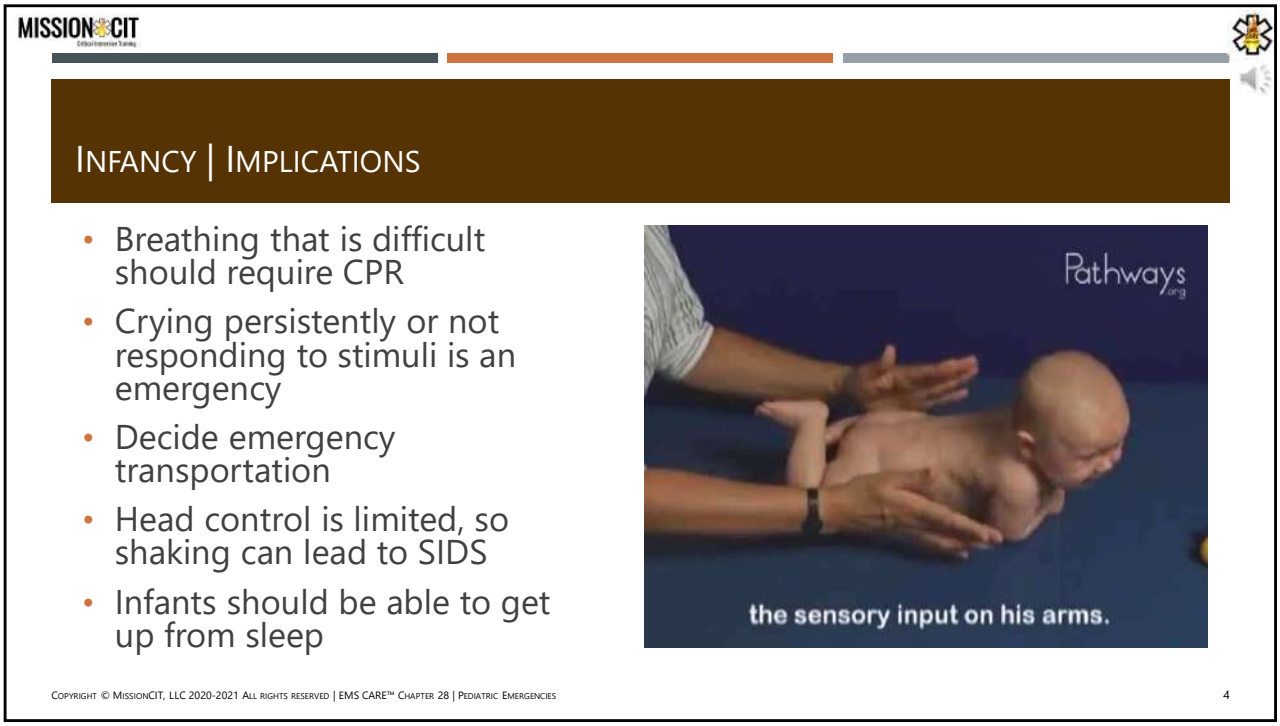


The most prominent cognitive development is crying, as this is the only way for the baby to communicate to you when it's hungry or when it is uncomfortable. Many times, it is a sign that the baby needs a diaper change.

This is your cue to understand what an infant needs. After its basic needs such as hunger are met, the crying should stop. If it doesn't, then it's a sign of persistent illness.

By the end of two months, the baby starts to smile at people, and some of them recognize the primary caregiver. They may be able to bring their thumbs to

their mouth and suck to calm themselves. Infants will also turn their heads to respond to sound and can make gurgling sounds.



As an EMT, you will be called when a child is having breathing difficulties, not responding to stimuli, or is crying uncontrollably.

Your first task is to check the infant's airways to ensure there is no obstruction. Do C P R if you have to and arrange for emergency transportation.

If a child has been crying persistently, it is a sign of serious illness. So, check the ABCs and transport the infant and a parent immediately to a nearby hospital.

Another aspect to keep in mind is that you should be

able to arouse infants quickly, even if they tend to sleep a lot. If the baby is not waking up, it should be considered an emergency.

Remember, the head control is limited, so shaking the infant is not advised as it can lead to Sudden Infant Death Syndrome or SIDS.

2 TO 6 MONTHS | PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

- Increases eye contact
- Tends to voluntarily smile at faces
- Hold their head
- Rolled over
- Maybe able to sit up
- Better muscle control
- 70% sleep through the night



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During this time, the baby increases eye contact with caregivers and parents and tends to voluntarily smile at faces. They also tend to hold their head, and most babies would have rolled over by six months of age. Some of them may even be able to sit up.

They get better eye muscle control, so infants can hold large objects with their hands. Also, they will have better control over the movement of their hands and legs.

More than 70 percent of babies can sleep through the night and may have a few short naps throughout the day.

2 To 6 Months | Cognitive Development

- Put things in their mouths
- Curious about bodies
- Amusing to see themselves in the mirror
- Respond to names
- Make different sounds



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By six months of age, babies are ready to explore their surroundings and may start putting things in their mouths. They are also likely to be curious about their bodies. This is why they find it amusing to see their reflection in the mirror, though they may not know that it is their reflection!

Some babies respond to their name, make different sounds to express their emotions, and may require attention from the primary caregiver.

2 To 6 Months | Implications

- Persistent crying is an emergency
- Calm the baby gently
- No eye contact is dangerous
- Indicates delayed development
- Look at the environment
- Talk to caregivers
- Document



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In this stage too, persistent crying is a sign of serious illness that may require emergency transportation. As soon as you see a crying child, consider calming the baby down. If nothing seems to work, be ready to transport the infant and one or both parents.

Remember, if the baby is not making eye contact, it could indicate delayed development or a depressed mental status. At this point, talk to the parents and look at the child's surroundings, and document all that you see and hear.

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6 To 12 Months | Physical Development

- Sit up without support
- May crawl, stand, or even walk
- Better control over arms and legs
- Can take objects
- Teething has started



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When a baby is 12 months, it must be able to sit up without support. Some babies can also crawl, stand-up, or even walk, depending on variations in growth. Each child is different and grows differently.

They also have a better grasp of the movement of their arms and have a firm grasp. Using this control, they will be able to take many objects, and invariably, everything will go to their mouth as this is a way for them to explore the world around them. They can also take things out of a container or box and put them back in.

By 12 months of age, the teething process has started

and they may be able to start chewing soft foods.

6 To 12 Months | Cognitive Development

- Rapid cognitive development
- Identifies parents from strangers
- Develops a sense of fear seeing strangers
- Separation anxiety
- Copies gestures
- Babble
- Simple instructions



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Rapid cognitive development happens at this age. First off, the baby can separate parents from strangers and develop a sense of fear when they see strangers. Many children also experience separation anxiety or a sense of fear when they are separated from their parents.

By 12 months of age, babies tend to copy gestures, may communicate better using both babble and actions. They can also follow simple instructions like pick up toys.

6 To 12 Months | Implications

- Tend to put small objects in their mouth
- Check airways and provide CPR if needed
- Possibility of physical dangers if the baby is moving
- May take averse to strangers



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From an E M T standpoint, babies can put small objects in their mouth, that can eventually lead to choking. So, check if the baby's airways are clear. There is also a possibility for poisoning, given the baby's tendency to explore everything with their mouths.

If the baby is crawling or walking, the possibility of physical dangers is high too. So, look around the environment for possible dangers that the baby could be exposed to.

Finally, remember that babies know you're a stranger and may cry a lot when they see you. Throughout the

entire time, keep the child and the parent together as much as you can.



During this time, babies have grown into toddlers, and this when they start moving around. This is the time when they are curious and explore their environments extensively. This also opens the possibility of getting exposed to dangers and falls.

By 18 years, most children can walk and can even climb up the stairs. They may be able to eat with a spoon and drink from a cup.

12 To 18 Months | Cognitive Development

- Imitates parents and siblings
- 4 to 6 words
- Communicate what they want
- Can identify body parts
- Knows the use of different objects
- Wants the attention of parents



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Cognitive development is also rapid as a toddler can imitate parents and other elders like older siblings, caregivers, and other adults in the house.

In terms of communication too, there is a world of development. Toddlers can say at least 4 to 6 words, point to people or things, and can communicate what they want.

The toddler can identify body parts and follow simple instructions. They know the use of different objects and may want to get the attention of parents at all times.

12 To 18 Months | Implications

- Can communicate well
- Persistent crying is a symptom of serious illness
- Can swallow objects
- High chance of food aspiration
- Hesitate to allow strangers too close
- Use distractions like toys and flashlights
- Keep a parent close



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By this age, children can communicate what is bothering them. Still, persistent crying is a sign of serious illness.

Increased mobility exposes them to more dangers and there is also a possibility for exposure to poisons.

One of the aspects to watch out for is choking, as they can put objects in their mouth and even swallow them.

Likewise, children don't have the molars to grind food before swallowing, so there is a high chance of food aspiration.

Since children can identify you as a stranger, they may

not be forthcoming for a physical exam. Keep the parent at close quarters and consider using a flashlight or a toy to distract the child while doing a physical examination.

18 to 24 Months | Physical Development

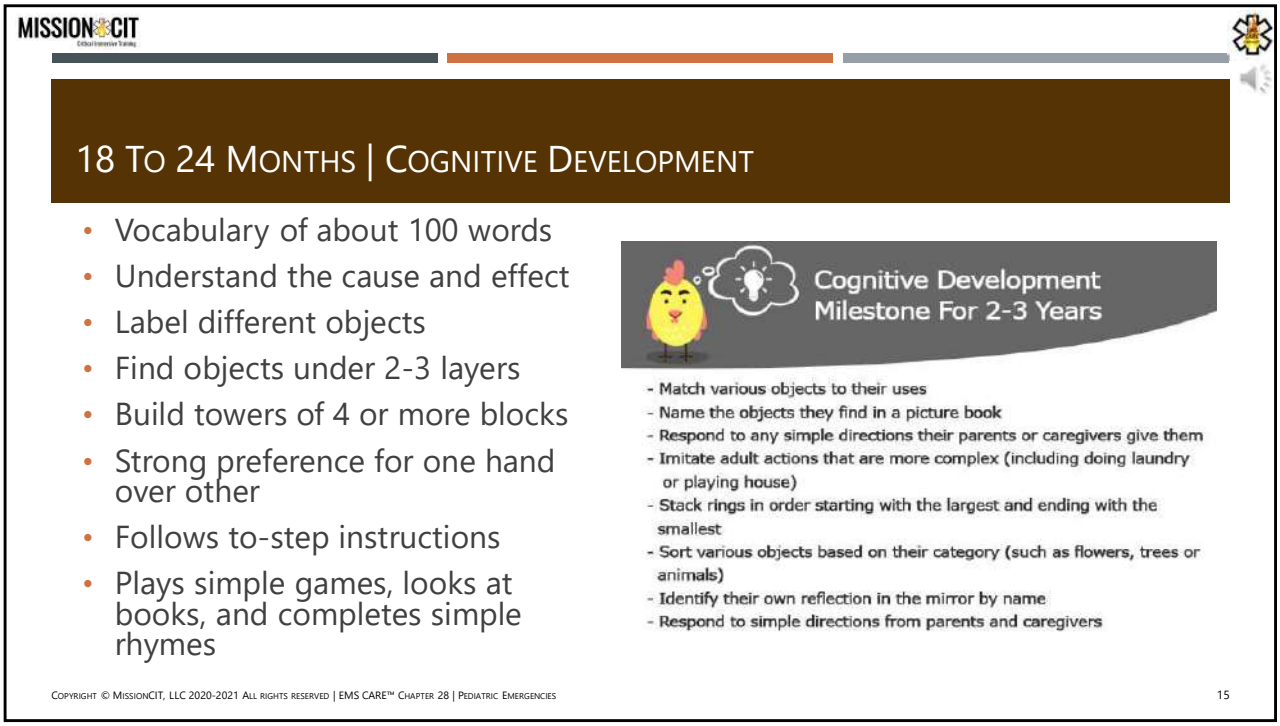
- Run and climb
- Increased chance of fall
- Improved gait and balance
- Kick a ball, throw a ball overhead, draw a straight line
- Need little help to move



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Children tend to run and climb during this time, so this greatly increases the chances of fall. They also have improved gait and balance.

By two years of age, most children can kick a ball, throw a ball overhead, run, and draw a straight line. They are more physically accomplished and need little help from adults to move around.



Rapid strides happen in language and communication, and by 24 months, children have a vocabulary of about 100 words. They can now understand the cause and effect of different actions and can even label different objects.

They can find things that are hidden under two or three layers, and may even be able to build towers of four or more blocks.

During this time, they have a strong preference for one hand over another and can follow two-step instructions.

The child is familiar with books and objects in it, and can quickly identify them. Plays simple games and may be able to complete rhymes.

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18 To 24 Months | Emotional Development

- Can distinguish between adults and children
- Excited to be around children
- Displays defiant behavior
- Exhibit more independence
- Special liking for specific objects



- A strong sense of ownership
- May begin cooperative play
- Treats doll or teddy as if it is alive
- Plays alongside others but will not play together with them
- Begins to use symbols in their play such as a pencil becoming a sword
- Has an awareness of a parent's approval or disapproval of their actions
- Will express emotions
- Will verbalise their desires/feelings (e.g. "I want to eat")
- Begins to obey and respect simple rules

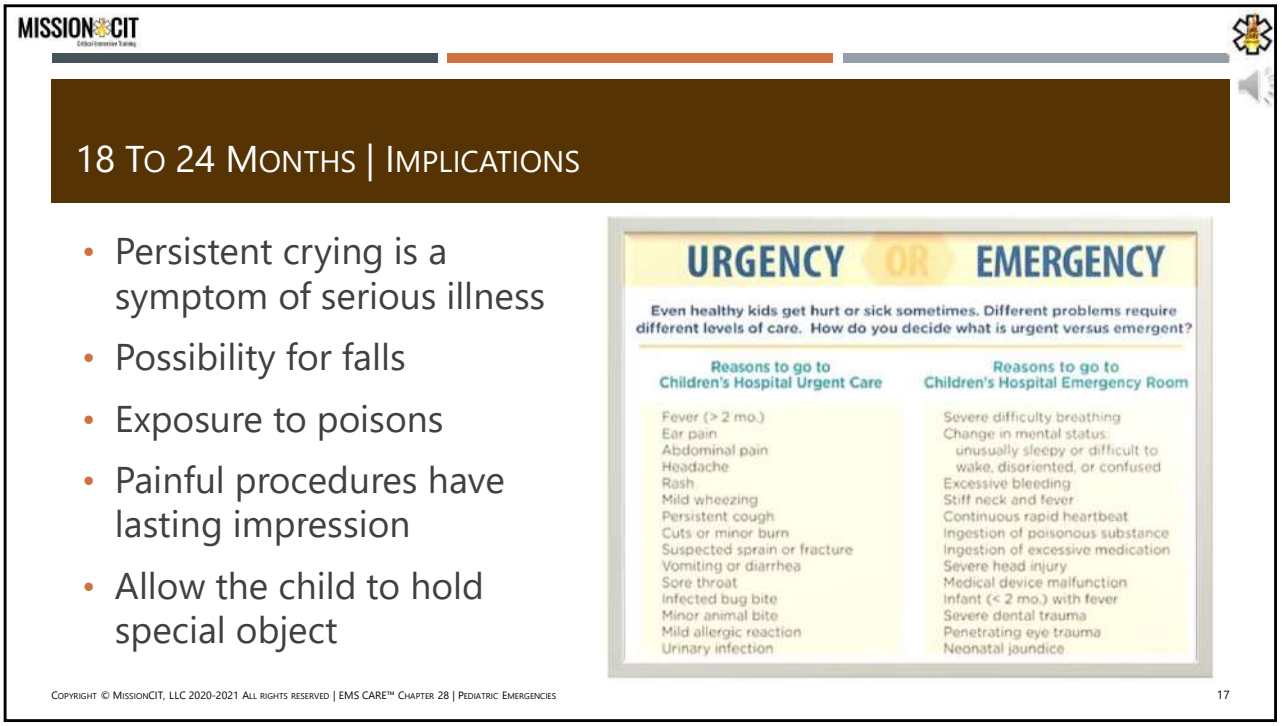
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Considerable social and emotional development also happens during these months. They can distinguish between adults and children, and in fact, tend to get excited when they are around children.

By 24 months, displays defiant behavior, especially when asked to do something against their wishes. Overall, children tend to exhibit more independence in their thoughts and actions.

At the same time, they take comfort being around parents and may have a special liking for objects such as

a particular toy or blanket.



Persistent crying is a symptom of serious illness even though the child can communicate better. This crying behavior must be treated as an emergency.

Besides, there is a possibility for falls and exposure to poisons and other sharp objects, given their curiosity to explore the environment around them.

By this age, children have memories, so painful procedures can have lasting impressions. Be careful about what you do. During physical examinations, it will help to allow the child to hold that special object.

Next, Missah will take you through the growth and development of preschool, middle childhood, and adolescent years.