

You and your premature baby: 8 months



Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minnesota

www.childrenshc.org

NICU Follow-Up Clinic

(612) 813-6722, Children's - Minneapolis

(651) 220-8063, Children's - St. Paul

What to expect this month

Your baby is becoming more interested in the world and learns about it by moving around in it - developing from twisting and rolling to creeping and crawling, building skills for walking. The more a baby practices these motor skills, the more finely tuned the brain's motor circuits become. With practice and exercise, awkward motor skills grow smoother and become more coordinated.

Caring for your baby

Share your knowledge of your child

As a parent or caregiver, you have the best insight into your child as a whole person. Stay involved in your baby's playtime. You will learn about your child's strengths and weaknesses, as well as likes and dislikes. Use this knowledge when you talk to health care providers and therapists. These professionals often focus on specific health care needs or concerns. Your insights will help them better understand your child and create a fuller developmental plan to meet your child's individual needs.

If your child does have a developmental delay, your primary doctor or NICU Follow-Up Clinic practitioner may have recommended early intervention services. These are government-funded programs through your local school district or county. They provide expert support and therapy that are done in the child's home.

Home safety

Keep baby-proofing your home to match your child's mobility.

- Use safety locks on kitchen cabinets, drawers, and closet doors.
- Move out of reach any objects that could break or topple over.
- Keep safety plugs in electrical outlets.
- Remove small objects that could cause choking.
- Supervise stair climbing and crawling.

This month with baby

Here's what 8-month-old babies might tell you . . . if they could!

Movement

I like to:

- move my legs in a crawling motion and lift my stomach off the floor.
- turn or spin on my stomach.
- practice using my cup, even though it may be messy.

I enjoy it when you:

- give me lots of time on the floor to practice crawling and sitting up.
- let me practice using my cup, even though it may be messy.

Playing

I like to:

- shout for attention.
- pat, smile, or try to kiss my mirror image.
- push away things I don't want.

I enjoy it when you:

- play tug-of-war with me; I like to win sometimes.
- call my name from another room to remind me you are there.

Thinking

I like to:

- drop objects into a container.
- watch my hands as I move them.

I enjoy it when you:

- wrap a toy in a blanket while watch, then let me unwrap it.
- let me practice "in" and "out" with toys in a container.

Communication

I like to:

- say double syllables such as ba-ba, da-da, ma-ma.
- babble with a variety of sounds and inflections. I will make a series of sounds that sound like the tone of your voice.
- copy your mouth and jaw movements.

I enjoy it when you:

- read me a book.
- show me a picture of something in a book, then show me the same item in our home; for example, a cup, ball, or bib.
- say the same words over and over to me while you change my diaper, bathe me, or comb my hair.