

Gross Motor Skills (walking, running, jumping, climbing, balance, strength)

Gross Motor development involves the larger, stronger muscle groups of the body. In early childhood, it is the development of these muscles that enable the baby to hold his/her head up, sit, crawl and eventually walk, run and skip.

Between the ages of 3 – 4 years, your toddler should:

- Run around obstacles
- Walk on a line
- Balance on one foot for 5 – 10 seconds
- Hop on her preferred foot
- Ride a tricycle
- Walk up and down stairs with alternating feet, without support
- Jump from 12 inches with feet together
- Use a slide independently
- Climb well (not including ladders)
- Skip, leading with 1 leg

Between the ages of 4 – 5 years, your preschooler should:

- Walk a balance beam forwards & backwards
- Perform somersaults
- Balance on 1 foot for 8 – 10 seconds
- Skip, alternating feet
- Begin to jump rope
- Throw a ball to hit a target
- Jump back
- Pump and maintain momentum while on a swing (may be started with a forward push)
- Hop 5 times on 1 foot
- Climb the rungs of a playground slide ladder

Red Flags for Gross Motor Development (1 – 5 years)

If you notice or are concerned about some of the following things about your child, you may want to talk to your physician or another health professional.

- Child is not meeting developmental milestones
- Child walks funny
- Child walks on his/her toes all the time
- Child is excessively clumsy
- Something appears wrong with child's legs and/or feet
- Child complains of persistent pain or fatigue
- Child's skills are regressing