

GROWTH AND ITS MEASUREMENT GUIDANCE & TIPS FOR PARENTS



- Growth measurements can help to monitor your child's health and development and reassure you that your child is growing normally. They can also identify:
 - toddlers who are likely to become overweight or underweight
 - toddlers who are growing too slowly
 - toddlers who are very short or very tall and who may have a health problem
- Toddlers grow more slowly than they did in their first year.
 - On average toddlers gain about 2.5kg (5 pounds) and grow about 12cm (4 inches) in length between their first and second birthdays.
 - On average toddlers gain about 2kg (4 pounds) and grow about 8cm (3 inches) in height between their second and third birthdays.
- If you have no concerns about your toddler's health or development then there is no need for them to be weighed and measured except at clinical or developmental assessments. However if you do have worries then ask your health visitor to carry out measurements. These will be plotted on a growth chart to determine if your child's growth is as expected for his or her age.
- Children of tall parents tend to be taller than children of the same age whose parents are short.
- Toddlers under two years old should be weighed and measured with no clothes, nappy or shoes and socks on. They will have their length measured while lying down. You may be asked to hold your toddler's head while his or her length is being measured.
- Toddlers over two years old will be measured in light underwear with no shoes or socks on. They will have their height measured when standing up.
- At least two consecutive measurements of weight and length/height over time are needed to give a picture of a toddler's growth rate.
- If your child is growing normally then his or her weight or height will steadily rise along, or be parallel to, the centile lines marked on the growth chart.
- Your toddler's weight and length/height will not necessarily be on the same centile.
- Toddlers whose length or height is below the 0.4th centile or drops from a higher to a lower centile may have a health problem. This may require referral to a paediatrician for assessment.
- Toddlers on a much higher centile for weight than height may be overweight or obese. This can be checked on a BMI centile chart.
- The head circumference of toddlers is usually only measured when there are concerns about their development.



Practical help and information
on nutrition and development

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