

Baby's First Steps

Most babies start to walk anytime between 9 and 15 months of age. Some may not take their first steps until they are 14 to 17 months old. Your baby will walk when his body is ready and his muscles are strong.

It takes more than strong leg muscles for a baby to be able to walk. Back, neck and arm muscles help with movement and balance. Strong trunk muscles help with posture.

In the first year of life, your baby will learn and develop skills to help him walk. At around 5 – 6 months of age, he will enjoy using his leg muscles to bounce up and down. Anxious to explore his world, he learns to roll over, sit and crawl.

At around 8 months of age, your baby will try to pull herself up and stand. She will use your hands and furniture to help improve her balance as she moves around. As her legs get stronger, she will be able to stand without support.

Learning to sit down is a little tricky. He may pull himself up to stand, but not know how to sit back down. At 9 or 10 months, your baby learns how to bend his knees. This helps him learn to sit down after standing.

You may see your baby stand, stoop and squat when she is around 11 months old. Soon, she will be taking a few steps forward. Between 13 and 18 months, she will be toddling around without help. You may even see her start to climb stairs, though she will have trouble getting back down to you.

Enjoy each of the exciting firsts you help your child achieve. If you have any questions concerning your baby's development, consult her doctor.



How can you help your baby learn to walk?

- Show him how to bend his knees to sit down as he learns to stand.
- Hold on to her hands as she tries to walk toward you.
- Let him go barefoot when walking inside. A baby's toes curl and grip the surface as he walks. This helps him move and keep his balance. Use shoes when outside or on a rough surface.
- Avoid using a wheeled walker. Walkers prevent upper leg muscles from developing correctly.
- Give her baby push toys that she can hold onto while she walks.
- Keep your home safe as he learns to crawl and walk. Get down on his level to observe what he can see and reach.

Brought to you by Parent Help Line at HSHS St. John's Children's Hospital to help keep kids safe, healthy and happy.



Call the Parent Help Line. Help is just a phone call away.
1-217-544-5808 or 1-888-727-5889, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., 7 days a week
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