

Is My Child Growing Well?

Questions and Answers for Parents

Children come in different sizes and shapes. Though your child may be taller or shorter, heavier, or lighter than other children the same age, changes in height and weight usually follow a regular pattern that is right for your child.

Why should I keep track of my child's growth?

The way your child grows says a lot about their health. Growing too fast or too slowly can be a sign of possible problems with health or nutrition.

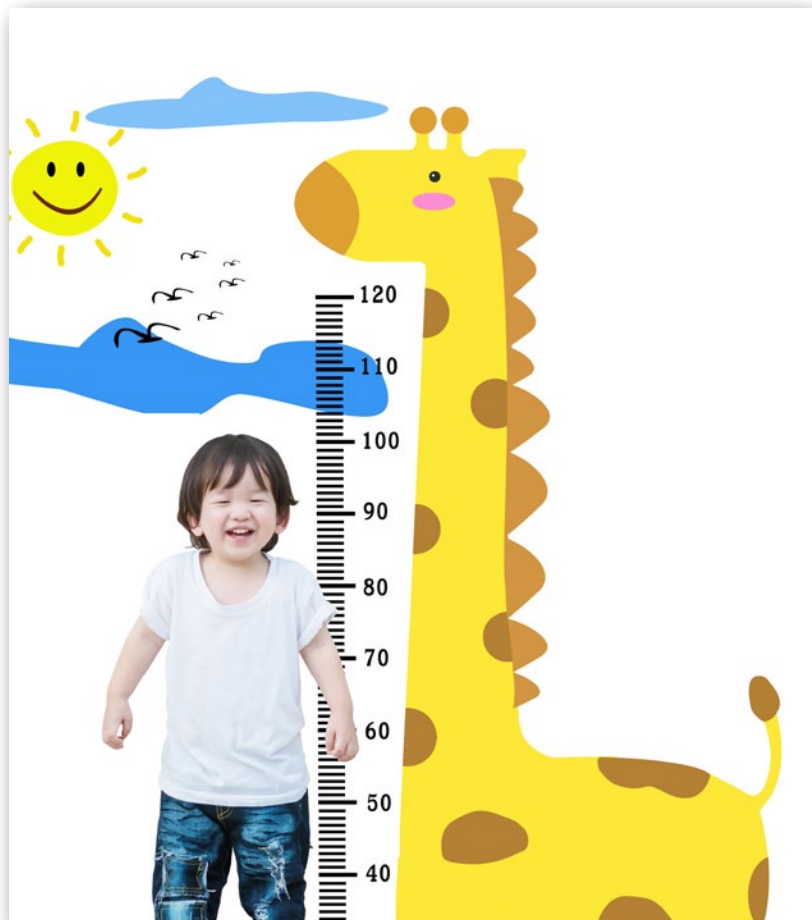
Starting from birth, your child's weight and length/height should be measured on a regular basis to see how they are growing over time. Babies and toddlers should also have the size of their head measured (head circumference).

How often should my child be weighed and measured?

Your child should be weighed and measured at all regularly scheduled well-child and immunization visits and/or at visits when your child is ill.

Typical well-child visits may occur:

- within one to two weeks of birth
- at two, four, six, nine, 12, 18 and 24 months
- once per year for children over two years and for adolescents



How is my child's growth tracked?

A growth chart is a type of graph used to track your child's growth pattern. Each time your child is measured, the new weight and length/height measurements are marked on the growth chart.

The growth chart helps show if your child is growing in a healthy way. Your child's growth chart will be kept as part of their health record until they become an adult. You can ask to see the growth chart at each visit.

Which growth chart should be used to track my child's growth?

The World Health Organization (WHO) Growth Charts for Canada are the best tool for tracking a child's growth. They should replace other growth charts that have been used in the past. The WHO growth charts are being used to track children's growth in most countries all over the world.

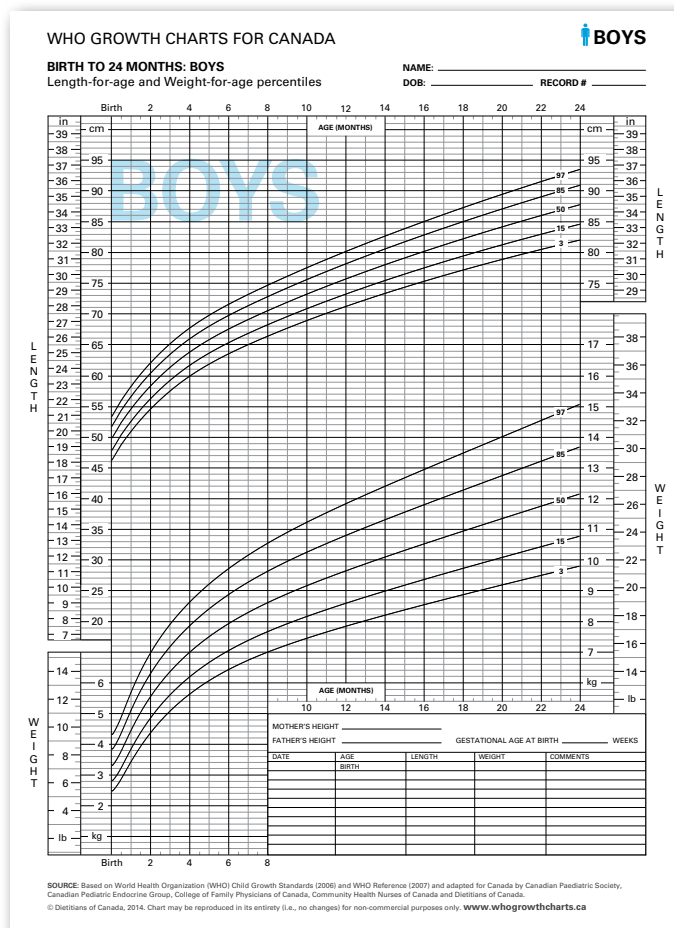
How do I know if my child is growing well?

Many things affect a child's growth including their eating and physical activity habits, environment, and family height. If your child is growing well, their head circumference, weight and length/height will follow smooth patterns.

All children have a pattern of growth that is natural for them. Regular weight and length/height measurements over time will show your child's own growth pattern.

Talk to your health care provider if you have concerns about your child's growth.

Here is an example of how growth charts look:



Source: Dietitians of Canada and Canadian Paediatric Society, 2023

HEALTH
DEPARTMENT

Durham Health Connection Line
905-668-2020 or 1-800-841-2729

durham.ca/health

Dial 311 (within regional limits)

If you require this information in an accessible format, contact 1-800-841-2729.



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