



When to Call: Does your baby need Occupational Therapy?

There are many reasons why a baby might have difficulty meeting developmental milestones on time. An occupational therapist is a skilled professional who can evaluate a baby's ability to interact with people and objects - from how babies use their eyes and hands to how they respond to sensory experiences such as movement, touch, and sound. All of these early experiences impact a child's ability to develop skills for eating, playing, moving, and growing during the first year of life and beyond. **We recommend consulting with an occupational therapist as soon as possible if you have concerns about any of the following:**



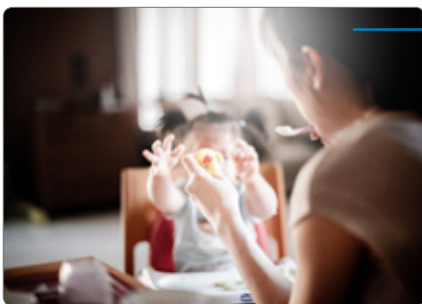
Difficulty using one or both hands to reach, grasp, and manipulate toys

By three months of age, hands start to come out of a fist and babies begin to actively reach for objects and bring their hands together. Soon they are holding objects and bringing toys to their mouths. Between six and nine months of age, babies are transferring objects between their hands and banging things together. They can use their fingers in a raking motion and then develop the ability to use a single finger to poke and point. By the end of their first year, babies are dropping and picking up objects routinely.



Excessive crying and trouble sleeping

Babies who have delays in sensory processing may over-react to touch, texture, movement, or sound. Occupational therapists can help babies learn to self-soothe and become more tolerant of sensory experiences. We can create an individualized plan for desensitization and teach caregivers how to implement techniques and strategies during daily routines.



Difficulty eating or transitioning to solid foods

Between four and six months of age, babies are usually ready to begin eating baby cereals and baby food fruits and vegetables. Between eight and ten months of age, a baby may begin eating small amounts of soft foods. An occupational therapist can help to determine if a baby has the strength, coordination, and sensory processing to support a successful transition to solid foods.