

UK-WHO Growth Charts 0–4 years



Royal College of
Paediatrics and
Child Health



World Health
Organization

GROWTH MONITORING USING GROWTH CHARTS

The UK-WHO growth charts

The charts in this book are based on measurements of healthy breastfed children from several countries, whose mothers did not smoke. They represent the pattern of growth for healthy children, whether breastfed or formula fed, and of all ethnic origins.

Babies come in all shapes and sizes and they do not all gain weight at the same rate, so every chart will look different when it is filled in.

Weighing and measuring

Babies and children up to 2 years of age should be weighed without any clothes or nappy on, as this can make a big difference to the weight.

Toddlers (aged 2 years and older) can be weighed wearing their vest and pants, but they should not wear shoes.

Be aware that different scales sometimes give different readings, particularly if they are not electronic. If you notice this, try to take your baby/child to the same place for weighing each time.

Length or height should always be measured if there are any concerns about a child's growth.

Up to the age of 2, your child's length (i.e. lying down) is measured, rather than height. Special equipment is needed to measure length accurately. Your child should not be wearing a nappy.

From age 2, their height (i.e. standing up) will be measured. Children should not be wearing shoes when their length or height is measured.

How often to weigh

It is normal for a baby to lose some weight in the first few days after birth. Your baby should be weighed in the first week as part of the assessment of feeding. Most babies get

back to their birth weight by 2 weeks of age. This is a sign that feeding is going well and that your baby is healthy.

After that, weight will usually be measured only when your baby is seen routinely, unless there is concern. Your health visitor may ask you to bring your baby more often if he/she wishes to monitor them more closely. Weighing your baby too often may cause unnecessary concern; the list below shows how often, as a maximum, babies should be weighed to monitor their growth. However, most children will not need to be weighed as often as this.

Age

2 weeks to 6 months
6–12 months
Over 12 months

No more than

Once a month
Once every 2 months
Once every 3 months

Remember that if you want to ask something you can always phone your health visitor or visit the clinic, without having your child weighed.



