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## Indicators for Physical Therapy

The following are general indicators that a child may benefit from a Physical Therapy Evaluation:

- Increased muscle stiffness
- Limitations in range of motion in arms, legs, neck, and trunk
- Muscle weakness
- Poor coordination
- Postural abnormalities/ asymmetries
- Difficulty maintaining balance
- Poor motor planning
- Delays in age-appropriate gross motor skills
- Delays in developmental milestones (see below)

## Gross Motor Developmental Milestones

### **At birth to 3 months, your child:**

- Lifts and turns her head when on her stomach
- When on his back, will turn his head to hear or see something
- Random movements become more purposeful but are typically large, jerky movements
- Brings hands to mouth
- Grasp is a reflex

### **At 3-6 months, your child:**

- Actively moves arm (reaches and swipes) when she sees an object of interest
- Grasps object voluntarily
- Plays with his own hands and feet
- Watches/plays with hands/toys at midline
- Transfers toys from hand to hand
- When on her stomach, lifts head and chest with weight on hands
- Holds head upright and steady
- Rolls from stomach to back and back to stomach

### **At 6-9 months, your child:**

- Uses his index finger to poke
- Holds an object in each hand and plays with each
- Transfers objects from hand to hand
- Pivots on stomach
- Pulls herself to hands and knees
- Sits without help, playing with toys

**At 9-12 months, your child:**

- Picks things up with pincer grasp (thumb and one finger)
- Drops and picks up a toy
- Manipulates toys with hands and fingers
- Uses both hands together to play
- Creeps (moves forward on hands and knees)
- Pulls to standing
- Stands without support
- Walks with support
- Can take independent steps

**At 12-18 months, your child:**

- Walks alone
- Begins to walk sideways and backwards
- Comes to standing without support
- Crawls up and down stairs
- Picks up small objects
- Stacks one object on top of another
- Puts objects in and dumps them out of containers
- Pulls apart objects, such as pop beads
- Fits single puzzle pieces
- Scribbles

**At 2-3 years, your child:**

- Walks well, runs, stops, steps up, squats down
- Walks on tiptoes
- Walks up stairs with an alternating foot pattern with one hand on rail
- Walks down stairs with a same-step foot placement
- Jumps two inches off ground or over a 2-inch hurdle
- Jumps down from a step height
- Stands on one leg for 1-3 seconds
- Kicks a ball 3-6 feet
- Throws a ball underhand
- Begins learning to catch a ball from a short distance
- Stacks more than one object (blocks)
- Strings large beads
- Imitates drawing horizontal lines or circular scribble

**At 3-4 years, your child:**

- Can run around obstacles
- Can stand on one foot for 3-5 seconds
- Stands on tiptoes for 3-5 seconds
- Can walk on a line without stepping off
- Can hop on one foot
- Rides a tricycle
- Can jump forward, down, and over objects with feet together
- Catches a medium-sized ball
- Throws a ball overhand and underhand
- Can build a tower of 9 small cubes
- Copies drawing of a circle and imitates drawing a cross
- Cuts paper in half

**At 4-5 years, your child:**

- Can stand on one foot for 10 seconds
- Stands on tiptoes for 8 seconds without moving feet
- Hops forward on one foot for 5 hops
- Walks on a line backwards
- Can complete a forward roll/somersault
- Gallops and skips forward
- Walks up and down stairs, alternating steps, without support from the wall/rail
- Catches a tennis ball
- Cuts on a line continuously
- Copies a cross and a square
- Prints some letters

**At 5-6 years, your child:**

- Skips, maintaining balance and rhythm
- Hops forward 20 feet without losing balance or letting the other foot touch the floor
- Jumps rope
- Walks on a balance beam
- Jumps over hurdles 10 inches high with a two-footed take-off and landing
- Jumps sideways back and forth
- Cuts out simple shapes
- Copies a triangle and prints his/her name
- Colors within the lines
- Has a mature grasp of a pencil
- Handedness is well established

<http://www.spokanecpt.com/105/gross-motor-developmental-milestones>

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