

# Baby's growth and growth checks



*Growing Strong* Feeding you and your baby

Great state. Great opportunity.



Queensland  
Government

## Measuring Baby's growth

### Weight

It is best to weigh your Baby with only a clean dry nappy on. Older children can wear light clothing.

### Length

Up until two years of age Baby's length will be measured lying down.

Once Baby is two, height is measured when standing up straight.

### Head circumference

Your health worker will measure Baby's head to check on growth.

### Growth charts

All Baby's measurements will be plotted on the growth charts in the personal health record book.

*Your Baby will need regular checks to make sure they are growing strong and healthy.*



## Growth of a breastfed baby

- Breastfed babies will grow more quickly than a baby who is formula fed and may look more chubby than formula fed babies. Later, breastfed babies grow more slowly than formula fed babies.
- By one year old, breastfed babies are longer and leaner than formula fed babies. This is a normal growth pattern for breastfed babies.

*When Baby is having a growth spurt, she needs more breastmilk.*



## Growth spurts and breastfeeding

Babies don't grow at the same rate all the time – sometimes they have growth spurts when they grow quicker than other times.

It may feel like all they want to do is feed and feed.

Your body will not run out of breastmilk, but you will need to feed more often for a few days.

If Baby is not six months old yet, you don't need to give solids during a growth spurt. You don't need to give top-up feeds with formula. Extra breastfeeds will give everything needed to grow well.

*The more you feed Baby, the more breastmilk you make.*



## Growth problems

Your health worker can pick up on any growth problems (like poor growth or childhood obesity) by looking at Baby's growth chart.

### Poor growth

If Baby's growth slows down, they may not be getting enough breastmilk, formula or healthy food, or there may be some other reason. Talk to your health worker about any problems you have giving Baby enough healthy food or drink.

Your health worker might ask the doctor or nurse to check Baby, to make sure there is no other illness which is slowing growth.



## Childhood overweight and obesity

Some young children are overweight or obese. This can cause a lot of health problems like diabetes later on.

Your health worker or nurse might ask the doctor to see your child too. It might be useful for you and your child to talk to the dietitian as well.

## Haemoglobin (blood iron)

Once Baby is six months old, your health worker should do a finger prick test to check for enough iron in the blood.

*Ask your health worker about iron rich solid food for Baby.*

If Baby has weak blood (anaemia), your health worker might ask the doctor or child health nurse to see if Baby needs any treatment.



## Monitoring your baby's growth

This will give you a picture about how well Baby is growing.

Take Baby to the child health nurse or child health worker to have their growth measured. Growth should be measured at:

- 0 – 6 weeks
- 6 – 8 weeks
- 4 months
- 6 months, 9 months, 12 months, 15 months, 18 months and 21 months
- 2 years old
- 3 years old
- 4 years old.



School aged children have a growth check every year.

Your health worker, lactation consultant or child health nurse can tell you more about breastfeeding or your baby's growth.

*If you have any concerns about your child's growth speak to your health worker, child health nurse or doctor.*

# Growing Strong

## Feeding you and your baby

For more information contact your local health worker  
or call 13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84).



<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.5/au>  
© State of Queensland (Queensland Health) 2012

Illustrator Julie Haysom