Early stimulation guide for parents

Your Child's Development



Dr Anand Diwan

Consultant Neurologist · Adults & Children

Brain, spine, nerve & muscle specialist

MBBS, DNB (Neurology) · MMC Reg. No. 88279

Scan to book your appointment

Conditions treated at our clinic

- Epilepsy and seizures (fits)
- Stroke and paralysis
- Migraine and frequent headache
- Vertigo, giddiness, loss of balance
- Parkinson's disease, tremor, slowness
- Memory loss, dementia
- Neck and back pain, sciatica, spondylosis
- Numbness, tingling, nerve pain (neuropathy)
- Muscle weakness (myopathy)
- Head injury after an accident
- Sleep problems
- Children: seizures, developmental delay, slow walking or talking

Tests at Narayani Hospital, under one roof

EEG · Video EEG · EMG / NCS · VEP · BERA · VNG (vertigo test) · CT brain · CSF test · All blood tests

Not everyone needs tests. When they are needed, Dr Diwan explains which ones and why.

The first years matter most

A child's brain grows fastest in the **first 3 years**. Every time you talk, play, sing or cuddle, new connections form in the brain. Loving, daily play is the best "medicine" for development.

Areas of development



Body movement — sitting, walking



Hand use — holding, picking



Speech and language



Understanding and learning



Social — smiling, playing



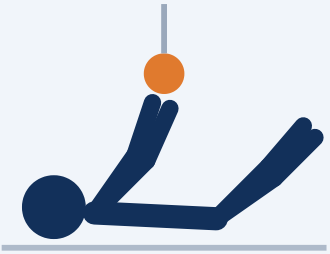
Seeing and hearing

> Every child develops at their own pace, within a range. Babies born early (premature) are measured by their **corrected age** — age from the expected delivery date.

Movement milestones



3–4 months
Holds head up on tummy



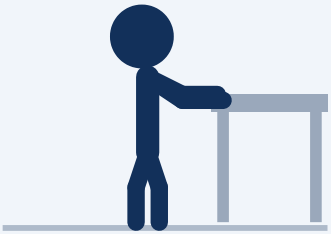
4–6 months
Reaches for toys, rolls over



6–9 months
Sits without support



8–10 months
Crawls



9–12 months
Stands holding furniture



12–15 months
Walks alone

What most children do by...

2 months	Smiles back at you; follows a face
4 months	Steady head; laughs; brings hands to mouth
6 months	Rolls; turns to sounds; holds toys
9 months	Sits; babbles "ba-ba, da-da"; knows family
12 months	Stands; first words; waves bye-bye; responds to name
18 months	Walks well; says several words; points to show
2 years	Runs; 2-word sentences; follows simple instructions
3 years	Climbs stairs; short sentences; plays with other children

When to see a doctor

Do not "wait and see". See a child specialist or neurologist early if your child:

- Does not smile by 3 months
- No head control by 4 months
- Cannot sit by 9 months
- Not walking by 18 months
- No babbling by 12 months; no words by 16 months; no 2-word phrases by 2 years
- Poor eye contact, does not respond to name
- **Loses skills** already learnt — at any age
- Very stiff or very floppy body; uses only one hand
- Fits, or does not seem to see or hear well

Early help gives the best results — the young brain learns fastest.

Play and stimulation: 0–6 months



Talk and sing

Look into baby's eyes from 20–30 cm. Talk during feeding, bathing and changing.



Tummy time

When awake and watched, place baby on the tummy for a few minutes, several times a day. It builds neck and back strength.



Things to see and hold

Bright or black-and-white toys, a rattle, a safe mirror. Move them slowly for baby to follow.



Respond to cries

Picking up and comforting builds trust. You cannot "spoil" a young baby.

Play and stimulation: 6–12 months



Floor time

A clean, safe floor space to sit, roll and crawl. Keep toys just out of reach to encourage moving.



Pull to stand

Let baby hold a sturdy sofa or table. Avoid baby walkers — they cause falls and delay walking.



Finger foods

Soft pieces to pick with thumb and finger build hand skills. Start home foods at 6 months; continue breastfeeding.



Name everything

Point and name — "cup", "cat", "mama". Play peek-a-boo and clapping games.

Play and stimulation: 1–3 years



Read picture books every day



Songs, rhymes, action songs



Blocks, puzzles, sorting shapes



Crayons — scribbling, drawing



Running, climbing, ball play outdoors



Pretend play and playing with other children

- Talk about what you are doing; ask simple questions and wait for an answer
- Let the child help — feeding, dressing, tidying toys

Screens

No screens before 2 years (video calls with family are fine). From 2–5 years, less than 1 hour a day, watched together. Screens cannot replace talking and play; too much screen time delays speech.

Healthy growth

Feeding

Only breast milk for the first 6 months. Then add home-cooked foods (dal, rice, vegetables, fruit, egg) and continue breastfeeding up to 2 years.

Vaccines and checkups

Give all vaccines on time; check weight, height and head size regularly.

Safe sleep

Always put baby to sleep **on the back**, on a firm, flat bed without pillows or soft toys.

Swaddling

If you swaddle, keep the hips and legs loose to bend, and stop once baby starts trying to roll (usually by 2–3 months).

If there is a delay

A delay is not anyone's fault. With the right help, most children improve a lot.

- Tests as needed: hearing and vision, blood tests, EEG, MRI
- **Early therapy**: physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, special education
- Parents are the most important therapists — do the exercises taught by the therapist **every day at home**
- Treat fits and other problems on time

Remember

- Talk, play, read and cuddle every day.
- No screens before 2 years.
- Don't wait — check delays early.

Appointments

Monday to Saturday · Closed on Sundays

Narayani Hospital

Consultation, tests & admission

Shree Vallabh Nagar, behind Chaan Hotel, near Mumbai Naka, Nashik 422009
Consult 11 am – 3 pm · Tests 10 am – 5 pm
Hospital open 24 hours for emergencies

☎ **0253 2224411**

Dr Anand Diwan Neurology Clinic

Evening consultation

11 Yashika Plaza, near Satyam Sweet, Govind Nagar, Nashik 422009
Consult 6 pm – 8 pm

☎ **0253 2472111**

Scan to book your appointment

Or book on WhatsApp

83900 00385 · 93702 54026

WhatsApp is for booking appointments only.

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www.diwanneurology.com

Read more online

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This booklet gives general information and does not replace medical advice. In an emergency, go to the nearest hospital.