

The Newborn Assessment

Apgar scoring: The Apgar score is one of the first checks of the newborn's health. It is assigned in the first few minutes after birth to help identify babies that have difficulty breathing or have a problem that needs further care. The baby is checked at one minute and five minutes after birth for heart and respiratory rates, muscle tone, reflexes and color.



Each area has a score from 0-10. A score of 10 means the baby is in the best possible condition. Nearly all babies score between 8-10. Scores < 3 often mean a baby needs immediate attention. Only 1.4% have scores < 7 at 5 minutes after birth.

Sign	Score=0	Score=1	Score=2
ACTIVITY Muscle Tone	Flaccid, limp	Some flexion of the arms and legs	Well flexed, or active movements of extremities
PULSE Heart Rate	Absent	Below 100/minute	Above 100/minute
GRIMACE Reflex/Irritability	No response	Grimace or weak cry	Sneezes, coughs, good cry
APPEARANCE Color	Blue all over, or pale	Body normal, hands and feet blue	Normal skin tones all over
RESPIRATION Respiratory Effort	Absent	Weak, slow, gasping, irregular	Good, crying

Birth weight & Measurements: The average weight for babies (37-41 weeks gestation) is about 7 lbs. (3.2 kg). Newborns may lose 7-10% of their birth weight. Babies should be back up to birth weight by 2 weeks of age. Newborns gain around 7 oz. weekly.

Conversions:

1lb=453.59237 grams

1oz =28.349523 grams

1000 grams=1kg

Head circumference: the distance around the baby's head (normally about 1/2 the baby's body length plus 10cm).

Abdominal circumference: the distance around the abdomen.

Length: the measurement from crown of head to the heel.



Physical Examination: A complete physical is important. Each body system is carefully examined for signs of health and normal function. The physician also looks for any signs of illness or birth defects. Part of this exam checks the baby's vital signs.

Vital Signs

- Temperature: maintains stable temp of 98.6 F (37C)
 - Pulse: 120-160 beats/minute
 - Breathing rate: 30-60 breaths/minute

How much will my newborn eat?

A newborn's small stomach is easily filled by frequent breastfeeding. Baby's stomach grows as Mom's milk increases. Frequent feeding and skin-to-skin contact builds milk supply.

On day 1, baby takes in about a teaspoon each feed, and by day 3 the amount is about the size of a ping pong ball, or around an oz. Feed baby every time he will latch (feed 8-10 times a day) and if you have any breastfeeding issues or concerns, talk to an IBCLC.

Babies will have one diaper for each 24 hours old he is. After 6 days, Baby should have around 8 wet diapers every 24 hours.

