









Development-based Milestone Symbols™*

The Gerber Nutrition Journey:
A milestone based plan dedicated to helping babies grow up healthy and happy



	 Newborn+ 0-4 months	 Supported Sitter 4-6 months	 Sitter 6-8 months	 Crawler 8-12 months	 Toddler 12+ months		 Preschooler 24+ months	
Gross Motor Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Little truncal (vertical) stability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Controls the head Truncal stability to sit with support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sits independently Truncal stability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crawls with stomach off the floor May pull self to stand Struggles to get objects out of reach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stands alone Walks with and without support 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Runs well without falling Sits in a booster seat or at table 	
Fine Motor Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reflexive grasp only 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustained voluntary grasp 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primitive squeeze / palmar grasp Begins to rake (with fingers) food toward self 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begins to self-feed finger foods as pincer grasp is developing Begins to manipulate objects correctly (spoon) but does not use it for self feeding yet Explores objects with hands and mouth Can hold lidded cup independently 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feeds self easily with fingers Fine pincer grasp developed Begins to use spoon and fork 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manipulates small objects Practicing/mastering utensils Holds spoon level during transport to mouth Holds and drinks from a cup 	
Oral Motor Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rooting and sucking Early gag reflex 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moves puree food forward and backward with tongue to swallow Loss of extrusor reflex (tongue trust) Gag reflex locus moves from the mid portion to the posterior of the tongue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develops tongue wave and lip close Begins chewing movements using up and down movement of jaw ("munching") Uses upper lip to help clear food off of spoon Able to keep thicker purees in mouth Can drink from a cup held by feeder Eruption of first tooth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing tongue lateralization used to move food to jaw line for mashing and chewing Begins to use jaw to mash and chew food Begins to track and sort pieces of food in the mouth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Able to drink from a cup or straw Skillful at chewing of complex foods Bites through a variety of textures Coordinated tongue movement First year molars begin erupting 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refined drinking skills Chews skillfully and efficiently Needs less time and fewer chews to finish a mouthful of food Molars present Uses tongue to clear food from lips 	
Eating Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suckling pattern from bottle or breast Secures nipple with greater ease 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May push food out of mouth with the tongue, which gradually decreases with age and experience Moves pureed food forward and backward in mouth with tongue to swallow Recognizes spoon and holds mouth open as spoon approaches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learns to keep thick purees in mouth Uses upper lip to help clear food off the spoon and move into the mouth Can drink from a cup held by feeder 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plays with spoon at mealtime, may bring it to mouth, but does not use it for self-feeding yet Holds a cup with a lid independently 	<p>12-18 Months</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dips spoon in food rather than scooping Begins using fork by scooping Moves food precisely between the gums or teeth for chewing more complex food Sits in a high chair for safety and security at family dinner table Bites skillfully through soft foods but may have more difficult with firm, hard foods Grasp the cup with both hands and tilts it to mouth with wrist rotation Typically uses an up-down movement of the jaw when drinking Takes liquids primarily from a sippy cup with valve May lose some liquid when drinking from an open cup or straw Takes 2 or more swallows in succession and drinks up to 2 ounces or more without stopping 	<p>19-24 Months</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emerging wariness of new foods; needs multiple presentations of a new food (as many as 10-20) Can be erratic in variety and volume of intake; monitor intake over the course of a week not a day When pressured to eat more, will likely eat less Enjoys having same pattern repeated at mealtime; same bib, spoon No longer needs the high chair safety and security May continue to lose some food and saliva when chewing May open the mouth wider than necessary to bite through the food. Chews easy meats easily and well. Offered more opportunities to drink from a regular open cup, but primary liquid is given with a sippy cup 	<p>24-36 Months</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> May express verbal refusal of food Toddlers and preschoolers do best with set menus which includes a variety of familiar foods along with some new foods May be very cautious about accepting new foods (neophobia) Prefers familiar foods and may require 10-15 taste experiences with a new food before accepting it Able to adjust the opening of the jaw when biting foods of different thicknesses Chews more difficult meats and some raw vegetables under supervision Chewing movements become more skillful and efficient. Needs less time and fewer chews to finish a mouthful of food Doesn't lose liquid when drinking from a regular open cup 	<p>36+ Months</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head extends to drain last drop from cup and also bends to spoon May help set the table for family meal Continues to refine chewing movements (i.e. reduced duration and number of chewing cycles) Continues to refine drinking skills from an open cup
Hunger Cues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cries or fusses to show hunger May bring fingers to mouth Roots for nipple or stops sucking May squirm or throw arms and legs about Moving, licking, or smacking lips 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opens mouth and leans towards spoon when food is presented May swipe food toward mouth when hungry Cries or fusses to show hunger Smiles and looks at you while feeding to communicate they want to continue eating 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leans toward food or spoon Reaches for spoon or food when hungry Shows excitement when food is presented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shows excitement when food is presented Makes noise to get parent's attention: cry, fuss, kick legs, bang toys on tray, etc. Puts things into mouth: fingers, cup, toys Focuses on feeding; watches parent prepare, bring, dish and spoon the food 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expresses desire for specific foods with words and sounds Combines phrases with gestures such as "want that" and pointing May appear low in energy, patience, and good cheer or exhibit "crabby" behavior when hungry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May approach kitchen or dinner table on their own Expresses desire for specific foods with words and sounds Can lead parent to refrigerator and point to a desired food or drink 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expresses desire for specific foods with words and sounds May approach kitchen or dinner table on their own A child is influenced by how parents eat and the food they select Is interested in eating when it's time to eat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expresses desire for specific foods with words and sounds Seeks out specific foods May be listless and cross due to hunger May approach kitchen or dinner table on their own
Fullness Cues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Slows down speed of sucking, may even fall asleep Starts and stops feeding often, latches and unlatches on nipple frequently with only a few sucks in between, eventually will not relatch Seals lips tightly when nipple is reinserted Ignores or spits out nipple 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Turns head away from spoon when full May be distracted or notice surroundings more when full Keeps mouth closed, will not open when spoon is presented Spits out familiar foods Blocks mouth with hands 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Slows down in eating when full Clenches mouth shut or pushes food away when full Leans back and moves head away from offered food May try to knock spoon out of parent's hand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shakes head to say "no more" when full Bats, pushes, or drops the serving dish off feeding surface Clamps lips shut, stops opening mouth Leans back away from offered food and may close eyes May stick tongue out when food is offered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shakes head to say "No more" when full Plays with food or throws food when full Uses words like "all done" and "get down" Chewing slows Crosses arms and refuses more food Spits out familiar liked foods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Becomes easily distracted Hesitates before opening mouth to accept additional food (automatic response) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loses interest in food Expresses self with phrases or simple sentences Resists coming to the dinner table Walks away from dinner table 	

* All ages are approximate. Because all babies develop differently, it's important that feeding choices are based on stages of development, not chronological age. References on file.