

MOVEMENT

In utero

- Baby initially moves using mass extension and antigravity flexion does not develop until ~ 28/40. Flexion starts in legs and moves in a caudocephalic progression.
- Baby contained within uterine sac: Learns to push off against surface, strengthens limbs.

0-3 months

- Physiological flexion in newborn – broken up by vol. movement, reflexes, gravity & position
- Movement is somewhat “reflex driven” / contained
- But movement is modified by experience (even in utero)
- Baby receives further sensation of movement through mother’s carrying and handling
- Head righting drives development
- Period of relative disorganisation around 3 months: asymmetry, loss of some coordinative reflex structures (eg suck-swallow)

4- 6 months

- At 4 months, the baby becomes lot more symmetrical
- Baby develops voluntary movement as reflexes integrate with emerging protective reactions (6 months+)
- Baby’s sensation of movement is primarily while stabilised in one position
- Asymmetrical weight bearing results in:
 - Elongation
 - Rotation
 - Dissociation

6 months+

- Emergence of protective reactions, postural reactions and internal stability and postural control allows for TRANSITION between positions and development of greatly expanded repertoire of movement.
- Baby experiences movement in all planes and dynamic transition
- Strengthening and refining

Prone

- First surface the baby learns to push off against (outside the uterus)
- Breaks up physiological flexion and prepares flexor tendons
- Reciprocal movement develops from weight shift

Supine

- Development of “key points of control”: movement with hips and shoulder stabilised against surface

Standing

- Initially “reflex driven”: primary standing
- Then astasia / abasia
- Then occurs with weight-shift => develops reciprocal movement

Sitting

- Initially: static and surface dependent
- Weight-shift facilitates development of protective reactions
- Then develops trunk control and righting / equilibrium