

Newborn Reflexes as Related to Feeding

ORAL REFLEXES

Reflex	Description	Disappears or Diminishes
Rooting Reflex	when the newborn's cheek is stroked, he turns his head to that side and opens his mouth as if ready to eat may be difficult to elicit in the first few days; becomes stronger over first 1-2 weeks	4-6 months
Sucking Reflex ¹	when a baby's lips and/or the area around his mouth are touched, he begins sucking; sucking can also be stimulated by the feeling of pressure on the roof of the mouth; sucking can be a self-soothing maneuver develops in the womb, beginning at around 12 weeks' gestation and fully developed by 32-36 weeks of pregnancy; preterm infants are more likely to have a weak or uncoordinated suck	12 months
Swallow Reflex ²	In close relation to the sucking reflex as liquid or food moves into the infant's mouth, the tongue moves it to the back of the mouth for swallowing develops in the womb, and present at birth	persists in adulthood
Tongue Thrust Reflex ³	when the roof of a baby's mouth, back of his tongue, or back of his throat is touched, the infant pushes his tongue out of his mouth present at birth	4-6 months
Gag Reflex ⁴	gagging in response to a spoon or food being placed too far back in the mouth commonly exhibited when starting solids; diminishes as baby figures out how much food to put in his mouth at a time	diminishes at 4-6 months, but persists into adulthood

¹ http://med.stanford.edu/newborns/professional-education/photo-gallery/neuro-reflexes.html#sucking_reflex

² https://wicworks.fns.usda.gov/wicworks/Topics/FG/Chapter2_DevelopmentofFeedingSkills.pdf

⁴ https://wicworks.fns.usda.gov/wicworks/Topics/FG/Chapter2_DevelopmentofFeedingSkills.pdf

PHYSICAL REFLEXES

Protective Reflex ⁵	when a baby's eyes and nose are gently covered with a cloth, the infant arches and makes efforts to push it away babies respond the same way to objects that obstruct nasal breathing, ensuring that infants who cannot breathe will pull away from the breast	persists into adulthood
Moro Reflex (a.k.a. Startle Reflex) ⁶	reaction to a sudden loss of support or suddenness of stimuli when one pulls up gently on the infant's arms and then suddenly lets go, he will extend his fingers and arms out and around, and cry develops at 25-30 weeks' gestation; asymmetry or absence of Moro reflex is concerning (may suggest injury or pathology)	3-6 months
Palmar/Grasp Reflex	toes curl under and seem to grasp on the thumb of the examiner when the middle of the foot is stroked upward; palmar grasp occurs with light touch to palm; disappears at 3-4 months, to be replaced by voluntary grasps at 45 months	3-4 months; voluntary grasp develops later and persists into adulthood
Galant Reflex	suspending the infant in a prone position and stroking the baby in a cephalocaudal direction causes the baby to move the hips towards the side the was stimulated	12 months
Asymmetric Tonic Neck Reflex	as the infant's head turns to one side, the arms will briefly come into a "fencer's" position, with the arm on the same side as the face straight out to the side and the arm behind the head flexed at the elbow	6-7 months

⁵ Protective: http://med.stanford.edu/newborns/professional-education/photo-gallery/neuro-reflexes.html#protective_reflex

⁶ Moro: http://med.stanford.edu/newborns/professional-education/photo-gallery/neuro-reflexes.html#moro_reflex

Stepping Reflex	when suspended upright with the feet touching a surface, one foot will lift and then step forward in an apparent walking motion; present after birth	3-6 months
Landau Reflex	when placed in a face-down position, the baby will straighten his torso and list his limbs and head appears around 4-5 months	12 months
Symmetrical Tonic Neck Reflex	a transitional reflex that helps with crawling when the baby's head is tilted back, tension increases in the muscles that straighten the elbows and those that bend the hips and knees; when the baby's head is bent forward, the elbows bend and the hips and knees straighten develops around 6 months of age	2-3 years
Tonic Labyrinthine Reflex	basis for head management and helping to prepare an infant for rolling over, creeping, crawling, standing, walking; initiates when an infant's head is tilted backwards while placed on the back, causing arching of the back, legs to straighten and stiffen together	6 months – 3 years
Babkin Reflex	In response to the application of pressure to both palms, the newborn may turn his head, open his mouth, or both. present at birth	3 months

Not specifically reflexes, but feeding-related behaviors and skills by age, <https://binged.it/2n2eq84>