

Prechtl's General Movements Assessment is simply a video of your baby lying on their back whilst they are awake, calm and alert.

## STANDARDISED MOTOR



- ✓ The assessment can be completed from birth up to 20 weeks of age (corrected age).
- ✓ It is non-invasive and non-disruptive.
- ✓ The video can be taken by parents or clinicians with appropriate consent.
- ✓ The video may be recorded by medical professionals whilst your baby is an inpatient, an outpatient, or by you in your home via the BabyMoves app.

## What's involved?

It is a standardised test of movement that can be scored, based on observation of your baby's movements, by certified assessors trained by the General Movements Trust. The length of the video depends on how old your baby is.

AGE	PHASE	ASSESSMENT DURATION
Up to 6-9 weeks, corrected age	'Writhing' phase	Up to 10 mins or longer
6-9 weeks corrected age through to 20 weeks corrected age	'Fidgety' phase	3-5 minutes

Prechtl's General Movements (GMs) are predictive of how the young central nervous system is developing. They can identify neurological issues predictive of cerebral palsy and other developmental disabilities. The results of your GMs videos will be discussed with you thoroughly by your medical team.

If your baby's GMs indicate an abnormal result, your multidisciplinary team may guide you through further investigations, assessments and early intervention supports.

**Specific early intervention and supports for babies and their families who are identified 'at risk of cerebral palsy' is proving to demonstrate better outcomes for children and families.**

## What are General Movements?

General Movements (GMs) are distinct spontaneous movement patterns that are evident in babies before birth and after birth up to 20 weeks of age (corrected age).

They are seen spontaneously when the baby is awake, calm and alert and not externally stimulated (such as a parent playing or talking with them).

You may be familiar with other spontaneous motor patterns seen in young babies such as startles, twitches, yawning and breathing movements.

GMs involve the whole body and are variable, complex, fluent and elegant.






GMs mature and change in a specific order:

AGE	PHASE
Up to 6-9 weeks, corrected age	'Writhing'
12 weeks through to 16–20 weeks, corrected age	'Fidgety'

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## What are the benefits of GM assessment?

-  General assessments are a cost-effective way of assessing a baby's young nervous system.
-  The standardised Prechtl's GMs assessment provides an assessment of these General Movement patterns of young infants.
-  If GMs are identified as 'absent' or 'abnormal' in a particular way it may indicate risk of neurological conditions, in particular cerebral palsy.
-  GMs videoed around 3 months of age (12–16 weeks corrected age) provide the most predictive information about the likelihood risk of cerebral palsy.
-  Identifying infants at 'high risk of cerebral palsy' early using the GMs assessments means that parent supports and specific treatments can start very early with potentially better outcomes for infants and families.

## How is the assessment done?

Consent to the video must be given prior to videoing, and clinicians will discuss the assessment with you if the video is being taken by a clinician.

The assessment can be done by observing the spontaneous movements of your baby, lying on their back on a mat on the floor in quiet surrounds while they are awake, calm and alert.

Your baby should not have any toys or pacifiers and be lightly dressed (no socks).

Try not to play or talk with your baby while the video is taken as this can change the movements that are seen.

Comfort your child as required, however babies that are upset or crying change the movements and make the video difficult to score.

If your baby has a strong head preference, try to reposition their head towards the middle during the video assessment.

The clinician taking the video may position your baby nested in a pillow if your baby has severe reflux or is more settled in a nested pillow position.

Video quietly over the top of your baby, with your baby orientated vertically and make sure that you can see all of your baby including their hands and feet.

The clinician taking the video may set up a tripod and will need to document your baby's date of birth, date of video and corrected age.

Regardless of who takes your baby's video, the General Movements Assessment will be scored by certified assessors trained by the General Movements Trust.

There are a growing number of certified assessors throughout Australia qualified to score the GMs assessment.

Results of your baby's GMs assessment will be communicated with you by your multidisciplinary team.

Your baby's GMs video will be stored securely following all state and federal policies and standards.

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## Should my child have the General Movements Assessment?

If your baby is under 20 weeks age (corrected age) and:

- there were medical concerns at birth (spent time in a Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, prematurity, lack of oxygen, stroke or congenital heart disease); or
- your baby is not developing typically like babies of similar corrected age;

the General Movements Assessment may give extra information of how your baby's neurological system is developing.

The General Movements Assessment is not currently used as a screening tool for all healthy babies without any developmental concerns.

Please speak to your doctor or multidisciplinary team if you have concerns about your baby or you would like to know more about the General Movements Assessment.

## Who can do this assessment?

In some hospitals and community centres across Australia, videos are taken and scored by General Movements Trust trained medical professionals.

Videos can also be taken by parents including via the BabyMoves app.

These videos are then scored by professionals who are trained by the General Movements Trust.

Please follow the instructions on how the video assessment is done, and read the BabyMoves handout if taking a video at home.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to discuss these with your doctor or therapist.

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