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Developmental Assessment and Milestone Review

Practical 02 / Supervised clinical examination

Aim

Assess the main developmental domains and explain age-appropriate follow-up.

Principle

Development is evaluated across gross motor, fine motor, language and social or adaptive domains through history and observation.

Materials and Requirements

- Milestone chart and age-specific screening prompts
- Age-appropriate toys and caregiver interview checklist

Procedure

1. Ask about pregnancy and birth, corrected age when indicated, chronic illness, hearing and vision. Ask what caregivers notice at home.
2. Record chronological or corrected age as appropriate, the caregiver's priorities and a specific skill they have noticed at home. Verify which concerns involve loss of an established ability.
3. Observe posture, spontaneous movements and interaction before testing. Ask about skills reached, age at acquisition and any loss of ability.
4. Begin with spontaneous play and interaction before asking for tasks. Observe posture, symmetry, eye contact and responses to sounds or visual cues in a calm setting.

Continue with step 5 on the next page.

Procedure Continued

Developmental Assessment and Milestone Review

5. Use safe play tasks suited to the child's age. Observe gross motor, hand use, receptive and expressive language and social response.
6. Select matched tasks for motor, hand use, language and social abilities. Demonstrate without coaching the final response. Record independent, assisted, reported or not observed for each item.
7. Compare findings with a suitable reference or screening tool. Distinguish an untested skill from a skill that appears absent.
8. Compare with the age-appropriate reference and note testing factors such as language, hearing, visual difficulty, sleep or illness. Ask for a home example when a demonstrated skill is uncertain.
9. Summarise strengths, concerns and follow-up. Flag regression or abnormal neurological signs for prompt review.
10. Report strengths and concerns by domain, and arrange prompt clinician review for regression or new neurological signs. Document what will be rechecked and who will follow up.

Precautions

- Use play and stop if the child becomes distressed.
- Ask caregivers what the child does in a familiar setting and document untested tasks.

Observations and Interpretation

Developmental Assessment and Milestone Review

Observations and Record

Item	What to record	What it tells you
Gross and fine motor	Posture, mobility and grasp	Screens motor domains
Language and social	Response to sound, communication and interaction	Identifies concerns needing assessment
Trajectory	Recent gains or loss and caregiver observations	Separates possible delay from regression

Worked Example

An 18-month-old walks and plays appropriately but rarely responds to name and uses few communicative gestures. The child is calm and engaged with visual stimuli.

Result and Interpretation

There are communication and hearing concerns. Record observations and advise clinician-directed developmental and hearing assessment.

Viva Questions and Answers

Why ask about regression explicitly?

Loss of a previously established skill needs prompt assessment.

Which senses affect interpretation of communication findings?

Hearing and vision.

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