SEQUENCE OF DEVELOPMENT AND FEEDING SKILLS

BIRTH THROUGH 5 MONTHS

MOUTH PATTERNS
- Suck/swallow reflex
- Tongue thrust reflex
- Gag reflex
- Rooting reflex

HAND AND BODY SKILLS
- Poor control of head, neck, trunk
- Brings hands to mouth around 3 months

FEEDING SKILLS OR ABILITIES
- Swallows liquids but pushes most solid objects from the mouth; unable to move solids from the front. At this age, they are not able to move solids from the front to the back of their tongue.

4 MONTHS THROUGH 6 MONTHS

MOUTH PATTERNS
- Draws in upper or lower lip as spoon is removed from mouth
- Up and down chewing movement
- Can move food from front to back of tongue to swallow
- Tongue thrust and rooting reflexes begin to disappear
- Gag reflex diminishes
- Opens mouth when sees spoon approaching

HAND AND BODY SKILLS
- Sits with support
- Good head control
- Uses whole hand to grasp objects

FEEDING SKILLS OR ABILITIES
- Takes in a spoonful of pureed or strained food and swallows it without choking
- Drinks small amounts from a sippy cup when held by another person (spilling or leaking may occur)

MOUTH PATTERNS
- Suck/swallow reflex
- Tongue thrust reflex
- Gag reflex
- Rooting reflex

HAND AND BODY SKILLS
- Poor control of head, neck, trunk
- Brings hands to mouth around 3 months

FEEDING SKILLS OR ABILITIES
- Swallows liquids but pushes most solid objects from the mouth; unable to move solids from the front. At this age, they are not able to move solids from the front to the back of their tongue.
**5 MONTHS THROUGH 9 MONTHS**

**MOUTH PATTERNS**
- Begins to control the position of food in the mouth
- Up and down chewing movement
- Positions food between jaws/gums

**FEEDING SKILLS OR ABILITIES**
- Begins to eat mashed foods
- Eats from a spoon easily
- Drinks from a sippy cup with some spilling
- Begins to feed self with hands

**HAND AND BODY SKILLS**
- Begins to sit alone unsupported
- Follows food with eyes
- Begins to use thumb and index finger to pick up objects

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**8 MONTHS THROUGH 11 MONTHS**

**MOUTH PATTERNS**
- Moves food from side to side in mouth
- Begins to chew in rotary pattern (diagonal movement of the jaw as food is moved to the side or center of the mouth)

**FEEDING SKILLS OR ABILITIES**
- Begins to eat ground or finely chopped food and small pieces of soft food
- Begins to experiment with spoon but prefers to feed self with hands
- Drinks from a sippy cup with less spilling

**HAND AND BODY SKILLS**
- Sits alone easily
- Transfers objects from hand to mouth
10 MONTHS THROUGH 12 MONTHS

MOUTH PATTERNS
- Rotary chewing (diagonal movement of the jaw as food is moved to the side or center of the mouth)

HAND AND BODY SKILLS
- Begins to put spoon in mouth
- Begins to hold sippy cup
- Good eye-hand-mouth coordination

FEEDING SKILLS OR ABILITIES
- Eats chopped food and small pieces of soft, cooked table food
- Begins spoon-feeding with help

This is a sequence for normal, healthy, full-term infants. Developmental stages may vary with individual babies.