INFANT CORE CONNECTION

INFANT STABILITY AND MOVEMENT SCREEN

A quick clinical screening tool
for infants 1–3+ months

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INFANT CORE CONNECTION

INFANT STABILITY AND MOVEMENT SCREEN

1-3+ MONTHS

A quick clinical screen for manual practitioners

This screen is designed to help you observe the movement qualities associated with developing core control, connection and stability in young infants.

HOW TO USE THIS SCREEN

Observe the infant in **prone and supine** and consider:

□ Quality of movement, not simply whether a milestone is present
□ Symmetry and ease of movement
□ How the infant connects with the supporting surface
□ Development of midline control and stability
□ Patterns across findings rather than isolated observations

Milestones develop along a continuum. Use the age ranges as a guide while considering the infant's overall movement pattern

HOW TO USE THIS SCREEN

Use this screento observe how an infant organizes movement, postural orientation and stability - not simply whether a milestone is present.

WHAT YOU'RE LOOKING FOR

Observe for:

- Symmetry and midline orientation
- Weight distribution and support
- Quality and variability of movement
- Emerging core control and **stability**

QUALITY, NOT ACHIEVEMENT

Rather than simply noting whether a milestone is present, observe **how the infant organizes the movement**. Look for the quality, symmetry and variability of the movement, and how effectively the infant uses their body to create stability and control.

The goal is to identify where developing control may be limited—not simply whether the infant can perform the movement.

4-8 WEEKS

PRONE

- ◻ Lifts and turns head in both directions
- ◻ Legs able to rest in extension
- ◻ Mid-forearm contact progresssing toward full forearm contact with the surface
- ◻ Surface contact between the lower sternum and umbilicus

SUPINE

- ◻ Shifting body convexity with head rotation to the facial side
- ◻ “Fencer” posture emerging with active head rotation around 4-6 weeks and diminishing by 8 weeks

NOTES / CLINICAL OBSERVATIONS

8 WEEKS

PRONE

- ☐ Longer sustained head lifts and easy head rotation bilaterally
- ☐ Contact with the surface at or slightly above umbilicus
- ☐ Stable, symmetrical forearm contact, not tucked close to the body
- ☐ Relaxed and open lumbar area; no persistent extension tension
- ☐ Maintains prone stabiility with mild disturbance; does not roll over

SUPINE

- ☐ Midline orientation present with emergent stability; fencer diminishing
- ☐ Eyes tracking 30 degrees each way with head held in midline
- ☐ Stable - maintains thorax position; no rolling over

NOTES / CLINICAL OBSERVATIONS

8 - 12 WEEKS

PRONE

□ Consistent, sustained head lift with easy rotation to both sides
□ Support gradually shifts from forearms toward medial epicondyles; elbows moving to approximately in line with shoulders
□ Contact with surface moves below umbilicus towards the pubis
□ Relaxed and open lumbar area; no persistent extension tension
□ Maintains prone stability with mild disturbance; does not roll over

SUPINE

□ Head held easily in midline
□ Hands progressing to come together freely in midline
□ Legs lifting, hips and knees moving toward 90 degrees
□ Maintains thorax stability; does not roll over

NOTES / CLINICAL OBSERVATIONS

3+ MONTHS

PRONE

- ☐ Stable medial epicondyle support, elbows approximately in line with ears
- ☐ Sustained head lift with axial neck rotation
- ☐ Surface contact moves to the pubis
- ☐ Relaxed and open lumbar area; no persistent extension tension
- ☐ Maintains prone stability in response to movement and moderate disturbance; does not roll over

SUPINE

- ☐ Head held easily in midline; free axial neck rotation
- ☐ Hands play with objects in midline over the chest
- ☐ Hips and knees can be held at approximately 90 degrees
- ☐ Maintains thorax and pelvis position and stability without rolling over

NOTES / CLINICAL OBSERVATIONS

WHEN TO HAVE A DEEPER LOOK

Consider exploring more in-depth assessment and treatment strategies when movement quality suggests limitations in developing core control, connection and stability.

PRONE

- □ Surface contact remains high, particularly above the umbilicus after 8 weeks
- □ Strong extension bias with buttock tension
- □ Assymetrical arm position
- □ Arms held close to the body or spayed to side
- □ Fixed head preference
- □ Digging with the heels or toes
- □ Rolls rather than maintaining stability

SUPINE

- □ Strong extension bias with poor midline control and reduced surface contact
- □ Digging with the heels or toes
- □ Excessive flexion bias; feet within reach of hands
- □ Assymetrical arm movement
- □ Rolls rather than maintaining stability

NOTES / CLINICAL OBSERVATIONS

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BEYOND THE CHECKLIST

What you observe is only part of the picture.

The individual findings in this screen become more meaningful when you begin to recognize **how and why they occur together.**

Patterns of posture, support, movement and stability can help you identify where an infant is having difficulty organizing effective core control.

THE NEXT STEP

Move from observing individual findings to **recognizing the pattern.**

Learning to interpret these patterns can guide more focused assessment, clinical reasoning and treatment.

WANT TO LEARN MORE?

Visit
www.infantcoreconnection.com

Questions
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