Baby laughing checklist for parents

Use these steps to encourage a first laugh and to know when a late laugh needs a doctor.

- [ ] Watch for social smiles at about 2 months, the skill that comes before laughing.
- [ ] Expect a chuckle at about 4 months and a full laugh by about 6 months.
- [ ] Play peekaboo with full eye contact and no phone in hand.
- [ ] Tickle gently, and let a familiar person do the tickling.
- [ ] Talk to the baby often and answer every coo.
- [ ] Stop the game when the baby turns away or fusses.
- [ ] Treat laughing or smiling during sleep as a normal reflex in most cases.
- [ ] Tell a pediatrician about sleep laughter that comes with grunting or lip smacking.
- [ ] Call the doctor when a baby is not laughing by 6 months or has lost a skill.
- [ ] Ask the doctor about developmental screening when a milestone is missed.

Notes

For general education only. Not a substitute for professional medical advice.