

PRIMARY INTERVENTION WITH GROWTH

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Properly interpreting growth is critical for assessing the child’s nutritional, medical and developmental well-being. Clearly explaining growth charts to parents is key to supporting the division of responsibility in feeding.

One growth point		
Child’s growth	What to do	Explain growth to the parents
Around the mean (between 25 th & 75 th)	Ask feeding questions. Teach feeding & solve problems. Follow.	“Your child is about average in size. We will follow to see if that continues.”
Below the 25 th or above the 75 th %tile	Ask feeding questions. Teach feeding & solve problems. Follow.	“Your child is smaller (larger) than many other children. We will follow to see if that continues.”
<5 th %tile >95 th %tile	Ask feeding questions. Teach feeding & solve problems. Follow.	“Your child qualified for WIC by being smaller (larger) than most children her age. That is only a problem if you worry and try to get your small child to eat more or your big child to eat less. Our job is to help you feed in the best way.”
Several growth points, consistent growth		
Consistent growth around the mean	Ask feeding questions. Teach feeding & solve problems. Follow.	“Your child is growing predictably and well.”
Consistent growth below the 25 th or above the 75 th %tile	Ask feeding questions. Teach feeding & solve problems. Follow.	“Your child is growing predictably and well and is smaller (larger) than many other children. That pattern is likely continue.”
Consistent growth <5 th %tile or >95 th %tile	Ask feeding questions. Teach feeding & solve problems. Follow.	“Your child is growing predictably and well and that will probably continue. However, parents often worry when a child is especially small (big) and try to get the child to eat more (less). Don’t do that. It will create the problem you fear.”
Several growth points, inconsistent growth		
Slow smooth shift up or down <i>at any growth %tile</i>	Ask feeding questions. Teach feeding & solve problems. Follow.	“Children’s growth can gradually go up (down) if they were small (big) to start with. Growth often shifts if parents are relatively big or small. Your child’s size and shape is changing to be more like yours. Continue to feed in the best way. That will let him get the body that is right for him.”
<i>Rapid</i> shift up or down <i>at any growth %tile</i> Note: At times twins will be very small at birth and grow rapidly the first year.	Ask feeding questions. Teach feeding & solve problems. Follow. If parent can’t optimize feeding, refer back to doctor for further evaluation & intervention. Continue to do <i>primary</i> intervention	“It is unusual for a child’s growth to shift so rapidly. Let’s look at how feeding is going. Your feeding in the best way will help make sure that your child grows in a way that is right for her. ”