

Full-term gestational age tied to development at 12 months

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(HealthDay)—For healthy full-term infants, development at age 12 months is associated with gestational age, with scores increasing for each additional week of gestation, according to a study published online April 15 in *Pediatrics*.

Olga Rose, M.D., from Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston, and colleagues investigated the correlation between gestational age and mental and psychomotor development scores in a cohort of 1,562 healthy full-term infants born between 37 and 41 weeks. The Bayley Scales of Infant Development were used to assess development at 12 months.

The researchers found that, after controlling for birth weight percentile, gender, socioeconomic status, and home environment, the Mental Development Index increased by 0.8 points, and the [Psychomotor Development](#) Index increased by 1.4 points for every additional week of gestation.

"There is increasing evidence that birth at 39 to 41 weeks provides developmental advantages compared with birth at 37 to 38 weeks," the authors write. "Because [cesarean deliveries](#) and early-term inductions have increased to 40 percent of all births, consideration of ongoing [brain development](#) during the full-term period is an important medical and policy issue."

More information: [Abstract](#)
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