

Autism

Autism is a complex developmental disorder caused by an abnormality in the brain. Although symptoms may vary greatly from one affected person to another, there are **clear behavioral signs that can be detected prior to the age of 2 years, even within the first year of life.**

While many of these symptoms can be found in typically developing children, you should consult your family physician if you are concerned about your child's development in any of the following areas.

Fails to achieve any of the following milestones:

Babbling by 11 months
Simple gestures (e.g. waving) by 12 months
Single words by 16 months
2-word phrases (a noun and a verb) by 24 months

Loses any language or social skills at any age

Doesn't respond when name is called

Rarely makes eye contact when interacting with other people

Doesn't smile socially

More interested in looking at objects than at people's faces

Avoids or ignores other children when they approach him/her

Has odd or repetitive ways of moving his/her hands and/or fingers

Seems oversensitive to certain textures or sounds

Lacks interest in toys, or plays with them in an unusual way (e.g. lining up, spinning, opening/closing parts rather than using the whole toy)

Has to perform activities in a special way or sequence

The sooner you know, the sooner you can help.