

APGAR Presentation of Newborns

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Apgar is a test performed on a baby one minute and five minutes after delivery. It stands for, Appearance, Pulse, Grimace, Activity, and Respirations. The test was produced by Virginia Apgar, MD, in 1952. The one-minute test shows how well the baby tolerated the birthing process, and the five-minute test tells the clinician how well the baby is doing outside the mother's womb (Medline Plus, 2022). The clinician examines the baby's heart rate, breathing effort, muscle tone, reflexes, and skin color. The assessments are scored with a 0, 1, or 2 points (Medline Plus, 2022).

APGAR Categories

Breathing

If the baby is not breathing, the applied score is 0. If the baby's respiratory rate is slow or irregular, a score of 1 is applied. If the respirations are strong, along with vigorous crying, the infant will receive a score of 2 (Medline Plus, 2022).

Heart Rate

Heart rate is evaluated with a stethoscope. If there is no heartbeat, the newborn scores 0 for heart rate. If the heart rate is less than 100 beats per minute, the newborn is assigned a 1 for heart rate. If heart rate is greater than 100 beats per minute, the infant scores 2 for heart rate (Medline Plus, 2022).

Muscle Tone

If the muscles are loose and floppy, the baby will receive a score of 0 for muscle tone. If there is moderate muscle tone, the baby's muscle tone will be assessed with a 1. If there is active motion, the baby will be assessed with a 2 for muscle tone (Medline Plus, 2022).

Grimace Response

This can also be referred to as reflex irritability; it describes the response to stimulation, like a mild pinch. If there is no reaction, the infant scores 0 for reflex irritability. If there is grimacing, the infant scores a 1 for reflex irritability. If there is grimacing and a cough, sneeze, or vigorous cry, the baby will be assessed with a score of 2 for reflex irritability (Medline Plus, 2022).

Appearance of Skin Color

If the skin color is pale blue, the baby scores a 0 for color. If the baby's body is pink and the extremities are blue, the baby receives a 1 for color. If the entire appearance of the body is pink, the baby scores a 2 for color.

Ten-Minute Rule

If the score at 5 minutes is less still less than 6, enter the infant's Apgar score at 10 minutes (CDC, 2019).

Interventions

Scores of 7-10 require routine post-delivery care. Scores of 4-6 require some resuscitation, oxygen, and stimulation (rub back, etc.). A score of 0-3 requires full resuscitation.

Example Presentations**APGAR Score of 8**

A baby with a score of 8 will have strong respirations with a vigorous cry (2), grimacing with a strong cry in response to stimulation (2), and flexing of the arms and legs (2). However, the heart rate will be below 100 (1), and there will be some acrocyanosis (1).

APGAR Score of 6

A baby with a score of 6 will have an acrocyanotic appearance (1), A pulse below 100 (1), good flexion of the arms and legs (2), grimacing and no cry regarding stimulation (1), and weak, irregular respirations (1).

APGAR Score of 4

A baby with a score of 4 will exhibit a pulse well below 100 (1), weak, irregular respirations and a weak cry (1), some grimacing with no response to stimulation (1), some flexion of the arms and legs (1), and will be pale blue over most of the body (0).

APGAR Score of 2

A baby with a score of 2 will not be crying, will have little or no response to stimulation, very little flexion of the limbs, will have a pale blue body, weak respirations, and a low heart rate, possibly as low as 50-60. This baby will require full resuscitation.

References

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2019). *Apgar Score*. Retrieved from

<https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/facility-worksheets-guide/32.htm>

Medline Plus. (2022). *Apgar Score*. Retrieved from

<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003402.htm#>