
Preterm Growth Tracking: Corrected Age, Fenton & WHO Curves

A Clinical Guide to Standardized Assessment

[1] Baylor College of Medicine, Guidelines for Acute Care of the Neonate (2025-26).

[2] Guia de Bolso de Neonatologia, Santa Casa SP (2022).

[3] Klaus & Fanaroff's Care of the High-Risk Neonate (8th Ed).

[4] Neonatologia SOPERJ (2022).

[5] WHO Recommendations for Care of Preterm/LBW Infant (2022).

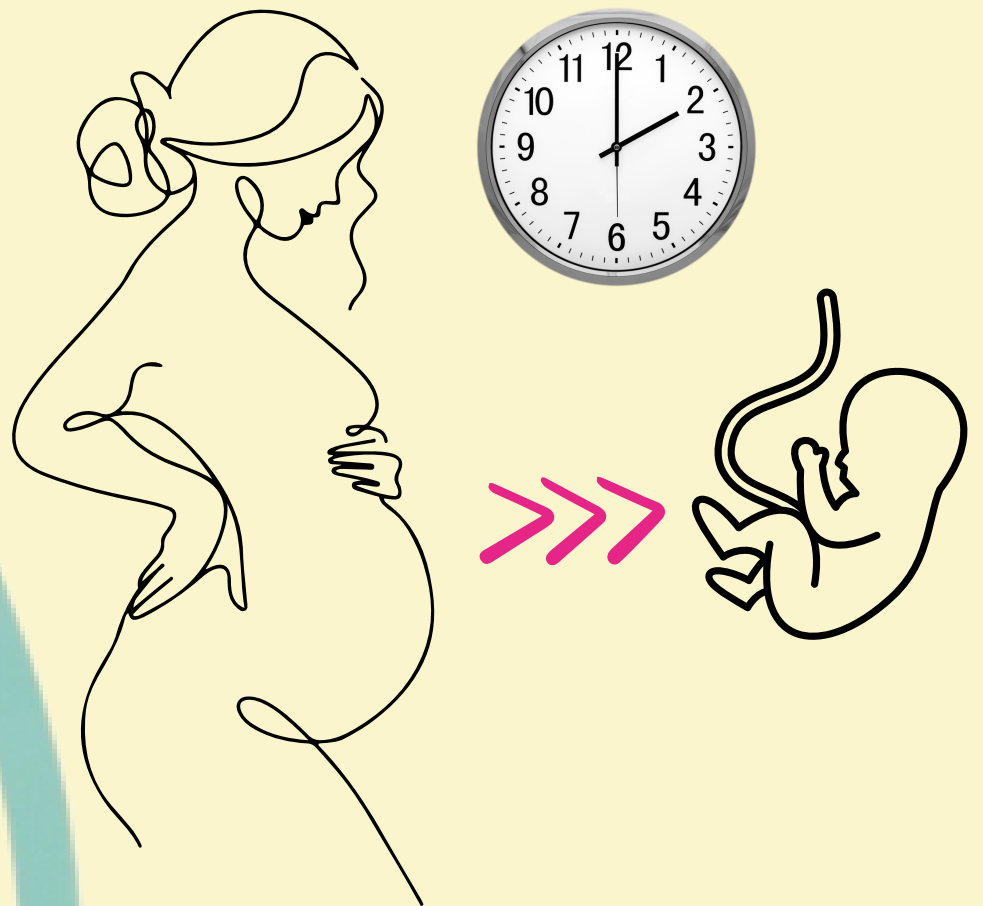
[6] WHO Training Course on Child Growth Assessment.





Chronological Age (Postnatal)

Age calculated directly from the actual day of birth [4, 5].



Corrected Age

Age adjusted for prematurity, reflecting the age the baby would be if born at term (40 weeks) [2, 4, 5].

Clinical Risk: Failing to correct age leads to misdiagnosis of growth failure and false developmental delays [2, 3].

$$[\text{Chronological Age}] - ([40 \text{ Weeks}] - [\text{Gestational Age at Birth}]) = \text{Corrected Age [2, 4]}$$

Clinical Example:

Scenario: A baby born at 32 weeks gestation is now 5 months (20 weeks) old chronologically.

The Math: 20 weeks - (40 weeks - 32 weeks)

Calculation: 20 - 8 = 12 weeks (3 months)

Corrected Age [2, 4]. ✓

Evaluate this infant against 3-month milestones, **not 5-month milestones.**

Use **CORRECTED** Age For:

✓ **Growth Tracking:** Weight, Length, Head Circumference (Maintain adjustment until 2 to 5 years of age) [2, 3, 4].

✓ **Neurodevelopment:** Milestone assessment (Maintain until 3 years of age) [3, 4].

Use **CHRONOLOGICAL** Age For:

✓ **Vaccinations:** Administer standard schedule regardless of prematurity [4].

✓ **Complementary Foods:** Introduction of solids (After 16 weeks chronological, >5kg) [2, 4].

Reminder: Always use the Corrected Age when plotting on the WHO charts post-transition [4, 6].

< 33 Weeks to 40-50 Weeks

Use **Fenton Curves** [2]

At **50 Weeks** (Transition Point)

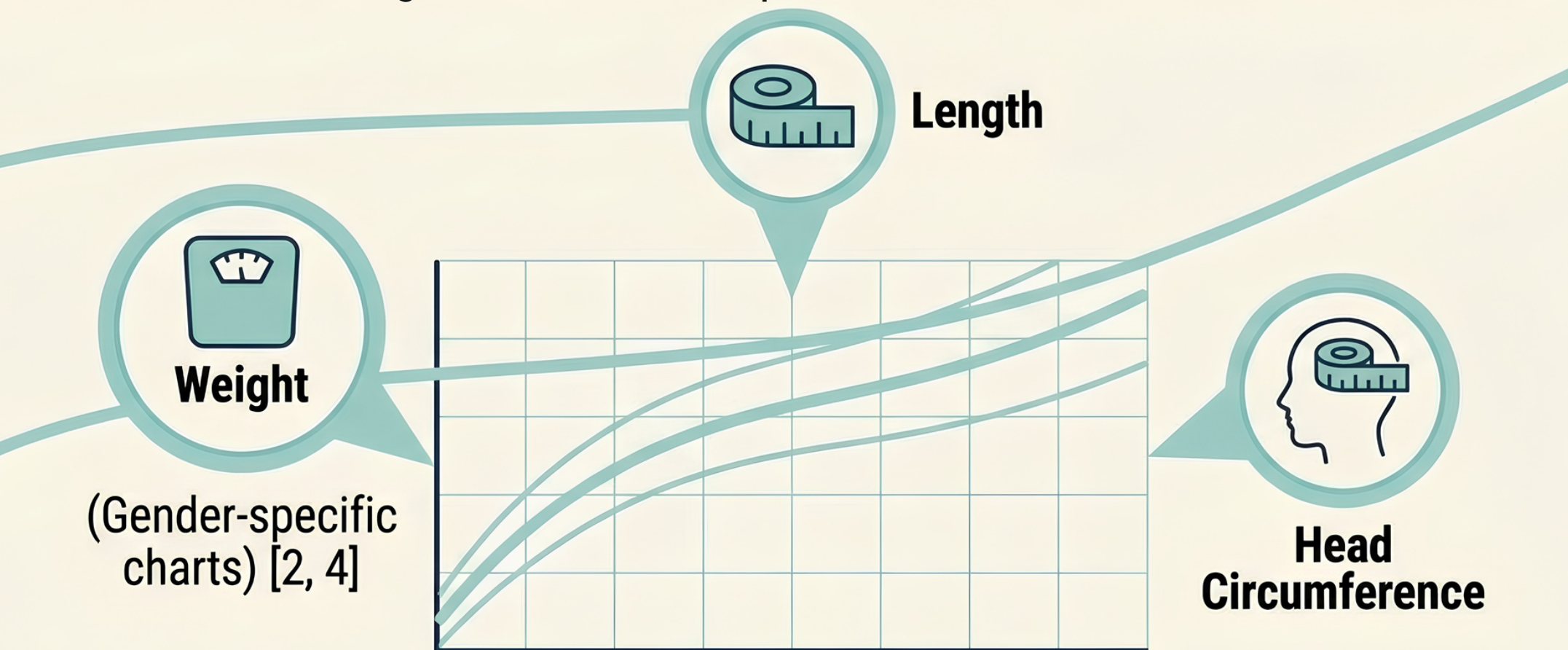
The Fenton **preterm growth chart** is **mathematically** designed to equal the **WHO Growth Standard** at **exactly 50 weeks**, ensuring a seamless transition [2].

> 50 Weeks to 5 Years

Transition to **WHO Growth Standards** [2, 3, 6]

Fenton Preterm Curves

Designed specifically to mimic intrauterine growth rates for preterm infants [4].



Target Growth Velocity: **Expect 15-20 g/kg/day for infants <2000g** [1].

Deep Dive: WHO Growth Standards

Used post-transition (>50 weeks) using the infant's Corrected Age [2, 6].

Length/Height-for-Age



Stunting

Identifies **Stunting**
(chronic undernutrition/
illness) [5, 6].

Weight-for-Age



Underweight

Identifies
Underweight
status [5, 6].

Weight-for-Length



Wasting
(acute events)

Overweight

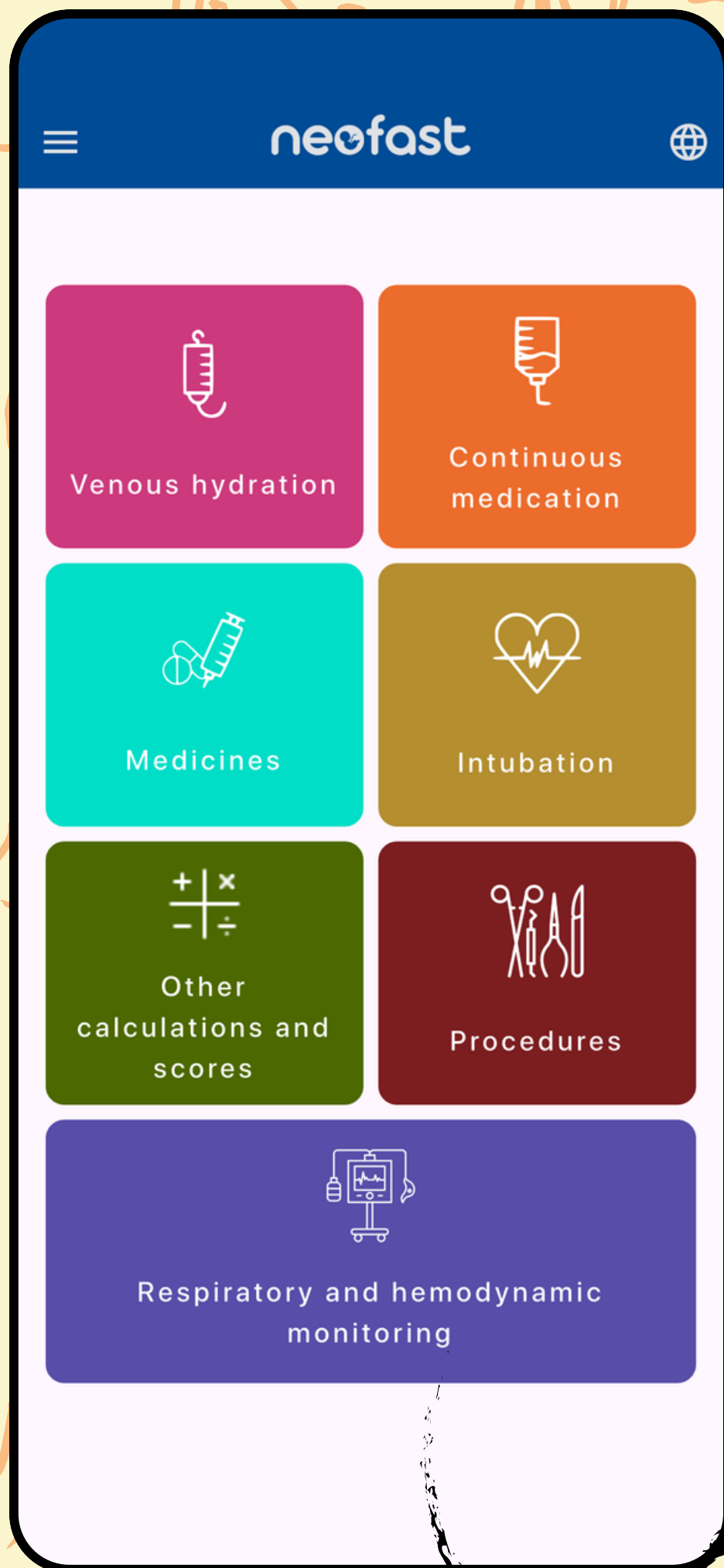
Identifies
Wasting (acute events)
or overweight status [5, 6].

- 1. Always Correct Age** for growth and neurodevelopment until 2-3 years [2, 3, 4].
- 2. Never Correct Age** for immunizations [4].
- 3. < 50 Weeks:** Track early growth velocities on Fenton [2].
- 4. > 50 Weeks:** Seamlessly transition to WHO Standards [2, 6].



Follow-up

Growth and
development



Stay tuned,
it's coming in
the next
update!

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