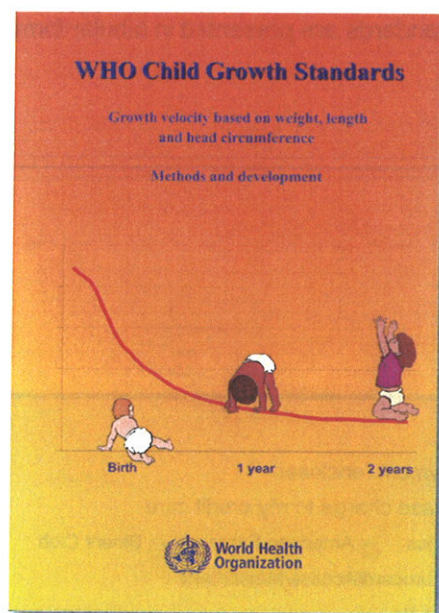

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**World Health
Organization**

WHO Child Growth Standards

Growth velocity based on weight,
length and head circumference
Methods and development



2009, 261 pages [E]
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The WHO Multicentre Growth Reference Study (MGRS) was implemented between 1997 and 2003 to generate new curves for assessing the growth and development of children the world over. The MGRS collected primary growth data and related information from 8440 healthy breastfed infants and young children from diverse ethnic backgrounds and cultural settings (Brazil, Ghana, India, Norway, Oman and USA). A key component of the MGRS design was a longitudinal cohort of children who were examined in a sequence of 21 visits starting at birth and ending at 24 months of age. A principal rationale for the longitudinal component was to allow for the development of growth velocity standards. The increments on which the velocity standards are based were calculated using the same longitudinal sample of 882 children and statistical approaches as those used in the construction of the attained growth standards.

The velocity standards presented in this report provide a set of tools for monitoring the rapid and changing rate of growth in early childhood and can be used to assess children everywhere, regardless of ethnicity, socioeconomic status and type of feeding.

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WHAT'S INSIDE THIS PUBLICATION?

The MGRS

The study in which primary growth data and related information were collected from 8440 children and their families in six country sites by over 200 field staff according to a common protocol.

In each site, a sample of children was followed from birth to 24 months (receiving a total of 21 home visits), while older children aged 18 to 71 months were visited once.

The growth standards

The most up-to-date statistical methodology was applied in the construction of the curves and the resulting standards have the following innovative features:

The MGRS was designed with the objective of providing curves that depict *how children should grow* when their needs are met rather than merely describing how they grow in a particular region and time.

The new standards establish the breastfed infant as the normative growth model.

The pooled sample from the six participating countries creates a truly international standard and reiterates the fact that child populations grow similarly across the world's major regions when their health and care needs are met.

The principal rationale for the MGRS longitudinal component was to allow the development of standards for growth velocity. The velocity standards are expected to serve as useful tools for monitoring the rapid and changing rate growth in early childhood.

This technical report

Describes the methodical process followed in the development of the third set of the WHO Child Growth Standards, namely, growth velocity based on weight, length and head circumference.

The standards are presented in tabular format.

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