

infants try to build towers of two blocks but fail.



FIG 9-1 Crude pincer grasp at 8 to 10 months old. (Photo by Paul Vincent Kuntz, Texas Children's Hospital, Houston, TX.)

Gross Motor Development

Head Control

Full-term newborns can momentarily hold their heads in midline and parallel when their bodies are suspended ventrally and can lift and turn their heads from side to side when they are prone (see [Fig. 7-7](#)). This is not the case when infants are lying prone on a pillow or soft surface; infants do not have the head control to lift their heads out of the depression of the object and therefore risk suffocation in the prone position early in infancy (see [Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, Chapter 10](#)). Marked head lag is evident when infants are pulled from a lying to a sitting position. By 3 months old, infants can hold their heads well beyond the plane of their bodies. By 4 months old, infants can lift their heads and front portion of their chests approximately 90 degrees above the table, bearing their weight on the forearms. Only slight head lag is evident when infants are pulled from a lying to a sitting position; and by 4 to 6 months old, head control is well established ([Figs. 9-2 and 9-3](#)).