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The status of the human newborn

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Figure 1: Newborn chimpanzees and humans show a grasping reflex in the hand (a); chimpanzees also show a grasping reflex in the foot (b), whereas humans' short toes do not allow full grasping.



Figure 2: The Moro reflex is evident in newborn humans and chimpanzees (shown here) when there is sudden loss of support to the neck: The arms quickly stretch outwards, usually accompanied by crying (shown here), and then return to midline with grasping.



Figure 3: Chimpanzee newborns, like humans, show a reflexive stand (a) and reflexive stepping (b). In some chimpanzees, however, the steps can end with a grasping foot (c), rather than the flat foot most often seen in human infants.

