

GROWTH CHART

Colorful Exam Notes - Uses of Growth Chart

QUESTION

Write the uses of growth chart.

a. What is a growth chart - 1 mark b. Uses of growth chart - 3 marks

a. What is a Growth Chart

The growth chart (also known as the "road-to-health" chart) was first designed by David Morley and later modified by the WHO. It is a visible display of a child's physical growth and development. It is designed primarily for the longitudinal follow-up (growth monitoring) of a child, so that changes over time can be properly interpreted.

Key idea

Tracks growth over time

Detects risk early

Guides action

b. Uses of Growth Chart

A growth chart has many potential uses in child health care and public health:

1 For Growth Monitoring:

It is of great value in observing and monitoring the physical growth of the child in primary child health care.

2 Diagnostic Tool:

It serves as a tool for identifying "high-risk" children. For example, malnutrition can be detected through the flattening or falling of the growth curve long before clinical signs and symptoms of it become apparent.

3 Planning and Policy Making:

By grading the degree of malnutrition, it provides an objective basis for health planning and policy making in relation to child health care at both the local and central levels.

4 Educational Tool:

Because of its highly visual character, the mother can be easily educated regarding the care of her own child, which encourages her to participate more actively in the process of growth monitoring.

5 Tool for Action:

It guides the health worker on the specific type of intervention that is needed based on the child's growth curve; it will also help to make referrals easier.

6 Evaluation:

It provides a reliable method to evaluate the effectiveness of corrective measures and the impact of a health programme or special interventions aimed at improving child growth and development.

7 Tool for Teaching:

It can also be used as a practical tool for teaching, for example, demonstrating to mothers the importance of adequate feeding and visually showing the deleterious effects of illnesses like diarrhoea on a child's growth.