

Rats are born at an early stage of neuro-ontogeny, comparable to the foetal stage of the human ontogenesis. Gradual maturation of the nervous system manifests in a changing motor behaviour. Here we review the chronology of motor development in the rat, including ontogeny of sensorimotor reactions, postural control, ground locomotion and swimming. The aim of the thesis is also to take inventory of methods for assessing the motor development in rats. Important intrinsic and extrinsic factors in the ontogeny of motor behaviour are discussed.