



Nine Months

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Development

Today's Visit

Vaccines:

- Influenza- October through February
- Catch-up on any missed vaccines

Screening tests:

- A fingerstick to check for anemia or lead exposure
- Vision screening

Your baby should be much more mobile since our last visit. She should be starting to pull up on furniture and may begin "cruising" or walking around the object while holding on. Babies usually learn to walk somewhere between nine and fifteen months, most around their first birthday. She should be able to pick up small objects using any part of her thumb and fingers and should be able to crawl either on her hands and knees or by a "commando crawl" on her belly. He should be saying hard consonant sounds like M's and D's in strings of sounds (like mamamama or dadadada). He should soon be practicing conversation or "jargoning" by using nonsense words as though he were having a conversation. He should be able to play peek-a-boo and start eagerly looking for you to reappear. This is the development of *object permanence*- the ability to recognize that something is there even if you don't see it. She may be showing signs of *separation anxiety* by crying when you walk out of a room or out of sight. She may also show signs of *stranger anxiety* by being "shy" or crying when approached by strangers.

Nutrition

Your baby should be taking three meals per day now, and may be taking snacks or bottles in between. You should be starting to introduce table foods, as any appropriate food that can be mashed to an acceptable consistency is fine. Finger foods should be progressing well and you can add items like Cheerios or Goldfish crackers when your baby is tolerating larger items well. Try to encourage drinking from a cup as much as possible to succeed in weaning the bottle by 12 months of age. It is important to avoid using the bottle as a pacifier and *never* give your baby a bottle in bed- it causes severe cavities and bad habits! Breastfeeding during the night should be discouraged.

If your baby has teeth, brush them gently with a smear of fluoride toothpaste. Exclusively breastfed infants and some formula-fed infants may need other supplemental vitamins or iron.

Infant Tylenol dose
_____ ml
every 4-6 hours

Infant Motrin dose
_____ ml
every 6-8 hours

Sleeping

Those nighttimes should be perfect by now! If you have noticed some sleep pattern changes, it is quite normal at this age. Most infants have dropped to two naps per day, and the transition can be difficult. Try to keep your routine the same and avoid placing your baby in your bed unless you don't mind a permanent fixture. This quickly becomes a habit, as many of you may have already found out. Teething, illness or unfamiliar surroundings all play a roll in altering your baby's sleep patterns. If you've experienced problems and need help, just ask!



Safety

Baby-proof your house. Put away valuable or breakable objects until your child is old enough to respect them (who knows when that is). Cover all electrical outlets, remove and lock all medicines, poisons, pesticides, cleaning agents, and other chemicals in the house as well as outside areas. Keep the number to Poison Control handy for yourself and any caretakers. Place gates on stairs and don't forget to buckle up that car seat for every trip (and he should still be rear-facing!).

Was your home or the home of someone your child visits regularly built before 1960? Let us know so we can decide if lead testing is necessary.

Stuff we're often asked:

Shoes- Most babies learn how to walk better without shoes, so it is not necessary to buy any special shoes. A soft-soled shoe may be used for warmth or for those situations where bare toes are socially unacceptable or dangerous.

Teeth- Using a soft brush to clean your baby's teeth is probably best at this age and can easily be done during bath time. A smear of fluoride toothpaste is fine.

Sunscreen is fine to

use on infants. Use something made for infants and try to keep her out of the sun as much as possible. Sunburns acquired early in life have been directly

linked to melanoma in adults.

Insect repellent use should be minimized as much as possible in infants. Cover up as much skin as possible with clothing and use insect repellent sparingly- wash off as soon as possible.

Immunizations

- From October through February, your child will receive the influenza vaccine. During this first year to receive the vaccine, a booster dose in 4 weeks is recommended.
- If your child is missing any vaccines, we will catch him up today.

Until next visit...

- Your baby will continue to explore her environment and will be close to, if not already, walking by one year of age. Allow her to learn to balance herself by pushing objects along the floor as she stands behind it- try the laundry hamper upside down or a large bucket. Close to one year, she may be ready for push toys.
- He will continue to develop social skills and enjoy playing and interacting with adults and older children. Help to develop language skills by labeling objects and teaching him funny sounds. The best toy you can give your baby is *you!*

Your baby's next well visit will be at 1 year unless we have discussed something different. See you then!