

your child @™

6 to 12 months

highlights of what's happening
at this stage of your child's development...

By the end of your baby's first year of life, they might already be crawling and trying to take their first steps. Remember that a warm, responsive and dependable adult caregiver is the most essential ingredient to their healthy development.

your child's health

Make sure your child's immunizations are up-to-date. Typical immunizations at this age will include:

- DTaP (diphtheria, tetanus and whooping cough)
- Hib (protects your child against meningitis)
- Prevnar (pneumococcal)

Other than the flu vaccine, vaccines do not usually occur at the nine month visit, unless your child has missed earlier vaccinations.

The Well Visit

Your baby will probably have well visits at six months and again at nine months.

Sleep

At this stage, your baby still needs two or possibly three naps a day — a morning, afternoon, and late day nap. Put your baby down to sleep for the night between 6 and 8 pm, and expect them to sleep 11 to 13 hours. However, even as late as eight or nine months, they may still wake for a night feeding — especially if their being breastfed.

take note...

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, you should let your doctor know if your baby:

...at 6 months:

- Seems very stiff, with tight muscles.
- Seems very floppy, like a rag doll.
- Refuses to cuddle.
- Doesn't seem to enjoy being around people.
- Cannot sit with help.
- Does not laugh or squeal.
- Does not actively reach for objects.

...at 9 months:

- Drags one side of body while crawling (for over a month).
- Does not point to objects or pictures.
- Does not search for objects that are hidden while he watches.

keep in mind...

- If your baby doesn't like a new food, don't give up — re-introduce it in a few days. Often a baby needs to try a food several times before they will eat it.
- Avoid foods that could cause choking such as whole grapes, popcorn, uncooked carrots, hot dogs, nuts or hard candy.

Nutrition

Although you might have introduced cereals to your baby over the past few months, they should still be drinking about 24 ounces of breast milk or formula per day.

Once your baby adjusts to cereal, move on to new, single-ingredient foods — fruits and vegetables first; then introduce protein. Experiment with mashed or pureed foods, but remember to introduce only one food type at a time for at least two to three days to detect allergies and sensitivities.

At around nine months, your baby should eat three meals a day while still receiving breast milk or formula. Serve soft, easily gummed and digestible finger foods cut into safe, bite-sized pieces. They'll love small pieces of cheese, steamed vegetables and fruit or Cheerios®. Avoid foods that need to be chewed. They should also begin drinking from a sippy cup, and by their first birthday (or soon after), they should be weaned from the bottle.

Always check with your doctor on recommended nutritional guidelines.

your child's growth and development

Physically

At 6–9 months, your baby will probably:

- Sit alone without support.
- Reach for a cup or spoon when being fed.
- Transfer objects from one hand to the other.

At 9–12 months, your baby will probably:

- Crawl well.
- Pull themselves to a standing position.

Intellectually

At 6–9 months, your baby will probably:

- Make noises to show displeasure or satisfaction.
- Look for a ball rolled out of sight.

At 9–12 months, your baby will probably:

- Play *Pat-a-Cake*.
- Dance or bounce to music.
- Say their first word.
- Clap hands, wave goodbye.

your child @TM

6 to 12 months

your child's growth and development (continued)

Socially and Emotionally

At 6-9 months, your baby will probably:

- Try to talk to image of self in mirror.
- Become distressed if a toy is taken away.
- Respond to own name and recognize family members' names.
- Show mild to severe anxiety at separation from parent.

At 9-12 months, your baby will probably:

- Offer toys or objects to others but want them to be returned.
- Push away toys or foods when they don't want them.
- Become attached to a favorite toy or blanket.

nurturing your child



Attachment

Over the next months, your child will show their strong attachment to their primary caregiver by acting upset when they leave and happy when they return. To ease the anxiety caused by separating:

- Say goodbye, so they learn that you will come back.
- Explain that you are going to leave, but that you'll return.
- Provide a comfort object that will make them feel close to you.

Play

At this age, a baby will use play as a chance to develop new cognitive, physical and social skills. Watch your child — you can learn so much about your child's interests by simply observing. In addition:

- Provide tummy time to help strengthen the neck, torso, and upper body as well as time to practice walking, pushing, pulling, climbing and jumping.
- Play hide-and-seek with different objects. Your child will enjoy seeing the objects appear and disappear.

Discipline

At this age, a baby still doesn't understand discipline. Instead, as your child gains mobility, your focus should turn to safety and exploration:

- Distract or redirect your baby from unsafe objects or activities.
- Never use physical punishment.

Literacy

Between 6 and 12 months, your baby will begin to communicate with you — first by mimicking your sounds, and then by speaking their first words. To encourage their ability to talk as well as their love of reading:

- Talk and interact face-to-face so they begin to understand the connection between sounds and words.
- Point to familiar objects and people everywhere and ask them to identify them.
- Sing songs with repetitive verses and hand motions that will interest your baby, such as *The Wheels on the Bus*.
- Provide books that are made of cardboard or cloth to withstand a little chewing and make page turning easier.

your child's safety

As your baby begins to crawl, they will want to touch everything he can — this is how they learn about their world. Therefore, make their environment safe.

- Install safety latches on cabinets, drawers, and toilets.
- Cover unused electrical outlets with outlet covers and use cleats to secure dangling cords on drapes and blinds.

keep in mind...

Always be aware of your baby's safety. Never leave them unattended near water, open windows, fireplaces or any electrical appliances. Watch them carefully when they are in the kitchen or bathroom where potential dangers are everywhere.

- Gate staircases and steps, cover sharp edges of furniture and ledges on fireplaces.
- Keep older children's toys out of your baby's reach. These may have small parts that can be a choking hazard for your little one.
- Keep all detergents, medicines, sharp objects out of your child's reach.
- Contact Poison Control immediately if you think your child has eaten or drunk something poisonous: 1-800-222-1222 (American Assn. of Poison Control Centers)

Born LearningSM is a public engagement campaign helping parents, caregivers and communities create early learning opportunities for young children.

United Way
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