

## Well Child Care at 9 Months Old

### Diet

- Do not start cow's milk or soy milk until your baby is 1 year old.
- Introduce meats to your baby. Try to give your baby 3 meals a day.
- Encourage you baby to drink from a cup and to feed him/herself.
- If your baby is exclusively breast fed or if you use water without fluoride (eg, bottled water, some well water, some city water supplies), talk to your doctor about supplemental fluoride. Also, if your baby is not on formula, you should continue an over-the-counter multivitamin, such as Poly-vi-sol with Iron.
- Avoid eggs, wheat, seafood, and peanuts, which are more likely to cause allergic reactions.
- Avoid honey in the first year because it can contain harmful bacteria.
- Fruit juices are mostly sugar and your child does not need them.
- To prevent choking you should never feed your baby hard foods such as hot dogs, apples, grapes, or raw carrots. To find the nearest infant CPR class timings and locations call the Arlington chapter of the American Red Cross (703-527-3010, ext 736) or Virginia Hospital Center (705-558-2468). You may also sign up online at their websites.

### Development

- Babies may squeal, babble, laugh and cry loudly.
- They may begin to pull themselves up and stand.
- Listen and respond to your baby by imitating his/her sounds. Your child may begin to imitate and understand speech. He/she may say Mama or Dada soon. You child will begin to understand "no".
- Remember to read to your child.
- Babies may start to have temper tantrums. Use a new activity to distract your child while remaining calm and not reinforcing the behavior.
- Appropriate play toys stimulate your baby's sight, hearing, and touch. Allow you baby to explore safe environments.
- You baby may enjoy playing peek-a-boo. He/she may resist you if you try pulling a toy away from him/her. Your child may look for fallen objects. He/she can use his/her hands to reach, grab, and pinch.
- Establish a regular routine for bed, bath, and meals with a regular caregiver to allow your baby to get used to his/her surrounding and develop trust.
- Your baby may be shy with strangers or develop anxiety when away from you.
- Between 9 and 12 months, you should try to wean your baby from the pacifier, if it is used.

### Hygiene

- Do not put Q-tips in the infant's ear canal. The outer ear may be cleaned with a Q-tip or washcloth.
- Brush baby teeth with a small amount of baby toothpaste with out fluoride.

## Sleep

Many 9 months old are sleeping through the night. If your baby is not, ask the doctor for further information on how to help him/her sleep.

- Every baby is different, but typically at this age, they take two naps a day totaling 2 to 4 hours.
- Children may not want to be put in bed. Try developing a consistent bedtime routine.
- Never prop a bottle or give a bottle to your infant while he/she is in bed.

## Teething

- Babies may begin to drool as they start teething.
- Some infants will be fussy for a few days before teeth erupt, but teething does not cause high fevers.
- Cold teething rings or cold, wet washcloths sometimes help to ease the pain.
- Before feeding, you may rub Anbesol or Orajel directly on your baby's gums. They usually provide infants about 15 minutes of relief. Tylenol can be used for pain on occasion as well.

## Safety

- Every time you take your child in the car, he/she must be properly restrained in an infant car seat. You should use a rear facing car seat in the back seat of your car until you baby is older than 1 year and greater than 20 pounds. For more information, go to <http://www.aap.org/family/carseatguide/htm> or <http://www.nhtsa.gov/> (search for "car seat").
- Avoid walkers. They do not help babies walk and are associated with a higher rate of injury.
- Avoid holding your baby while cooking, smoking, and drinking hot liquids to avoid burns.
- Reduce the temperature of your water heater to less than 120°F to avoid burns.
- As your baby becomes more mobile it is important to prevent falls. Never leave your child unattended and always put up crib and playpen side rails. Make sure windows are always closed.
- Be sure to "baby proof" your house, especially as your child begins crawling. Block off stairs; remove breakable objects; pad sharp corners; tie up curtain/blind strings; keep plants, medicines/vitamins, and cleaning supplies out of reach; and cover up electrical outlets.
- Your baby will explore with his/her mouth. Be sure to keep small objects such as coins or safety pins out of reach. Use unbreakable toys without sharp edges or small parts that can come loose.
- If you have guns, make sure they are locked up and out of reach. Store the ammunition separately from the gun.
- Always be sure to have a functioning smoke detector.
- In case of a poisoning emergency call 1-800-222-1222.

## Immunizations

- Your baby may need immunizations at his visit depending on how far along he/she is in the immunization schedule.

**Next Visit:** Your baby's next visit will be at 12 months. There are scheduled vaccines at this visit.