



## Well Child Care at 9 Months

### Feeding

Breast milk and/or iron fortified infant formula continues to be the main food for your infant. Cow's milk is not recommended until after 1 year of age. Formula feedings occur about 4 times a day now with up to 8 oz drank at each feeding. Do not put your infant to bed with a bottle. Encourage your infant to take formula or fluids by cup as weaning from the bottle should be complete by 12-15 months of age. Breastfeeding may continue as long as mother and infant mutually desire.

At 9 months, infants usually have 3 scheduled meals and 2-3 scheduled snacks, often with formula or breast milk. Use the high chair for meals and secure the safety strap. Continue to offer a wide variety of vegetables, fruits, and grains/starches. Chunkier mashed vegetables and fruits as well as some finger foods and meats should be introduced if not already started. Use only the single ingredient strained meats like chicken, turkey, beef or pork. Offer 2-3 tablespoons of meat 2 times per day such as at lunch and dinner. With practice the infant will advance from strained/pureed foods to thicker, chunkier foods. Help the infant learn to hold his own cup and let him practice with his own small spoon. This gets a bit messy but fun. Soft table foods cut into small pieces can also be offered and placed on the high chair tray. Let him try feeding himself small pieces of cooked carrot, green beans, banana, pears, peaches, melon, cheese, or macaroni. Cheerios and crackers are also popular. Avoid choking hazards such as peanuts, small grapes, hard candies and popcorn. Always stay with your infant while he is eating in case of choking. You can continue to help with spoon feedings, as needed – especially when the infant gets tired. Include the infant at the family dinner table. Meals should last no more than 20-30 minutes with snacks 10-15 minutes.

As more teeth erupt, the infant will learn to chew more effectively. Remember to clean the infant's teeth daily with a soft cloth or small toothbrush and water.

### Development and Discipline

Babies are starting to pull themselves up to stand. They love to bang things together to make sounds. They may start to say "dada" and "mama."

At this age, babies learn what "no" means. Say "no" calmly and firmly and either take away the item that your child should not be playing with or remove him from the situation. If your child continues to do what you told him not to do, you can put your baby in a playpen for 1 minute without any toys or attention from you.

Give your baby a choice of toys to play with and talk to him about the ones he chooses. During play you can give lots of kisses and hugs. Peek-a-boo is a favorite game.

### **Motor Skills**

- Goes from sitting to lying position unassisted.
- May pull self to standing position.
- Stands holding on to furniture.
- Tries to move one foot in front of the other when held upright.
- May try to crawl up stairs.
- May begin to walk with assistance.

### **Language Development**

- Imitates the rising and falling sounds of adult conversation.
- Imitates more speech sounds, but does not yet understand them.
- Repeats sounds again and again.
- May begin to say "mama" or "dada" appropriately.

### **Emotional Development**

Your Child:

- Continues to resist doing what he does not want to do
- Begins trying to imitate some parent behaviors.
- Loves showing off for family audience.
- May cry when parent leaves the room.
- May resist diapering.

### **Using play to help your baby's physical development**

What you can do:

- Provide bright colored toys and toys like cars and trucks that move.
- Provide toys that make noises – busy boxes that push, open, squeak and move.
- Supply blocks and shapes that fit inside each other (measuring spoons and cups).
- Play peek-a-boo games.
- Help him build towers with blocks.
- Roll a ball back and forth.
- Use bath toys that float, squirt, or hold water.
- Sing action songs together.
- Read storybooks together.
- Teach names of body parts by touching and repeating name.
- Teach sounds of animals. Point to animal pictures and make the animal's sound.
- Make sounds that are easily imitated.
- Play records, tapes, music boxes, and musical toys.

### **Sleep**

A regular bedtime hour and routine are important. Babies enjoy looking at picture books. You may want to read one regularly with your child. A favorite blanket or stuffed animal may help your baby feel secure at bedtime. If your baby wakes up a lot at night, ask your doctor or nurse for advice.

## Safety Tips

### **Car Seat Safety**

If your child reaches 20 pounds and is still riding in an infant seat, it is time for a new car seat. Some car seats can convert from a backward-facing infant seat to a forward-facing toddler seat. Car seats should face the rear of the car until your baby is one year old and 20 pounds. Carefully follow the manufacturer's instructions when installing new or converting old car seats for your child. For more information you can call the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration at 1-800-424-9393.

### **Avoid Choking and Suffocation**

- Avoid foods on which a child might choke (such as candy, hot dogs, popcorn, peanuts).
- Cut food into small pieces.
- Store toys in a chest without a dropping lid.

### **Prevent Fires and Burns**

- Practice your fire escape plan.
- Check your smoke detector. Replace batteries if necessary.
- Put plastic covers in unused electrical outlets.
- Keep hot appliances and cords out of reach.
- Keep all electrical appliances out of the bathroom.
- Don't cook with your child at your feet.
- Use the back burners on the stove with the pan handles out of reach.
- Turn your water heater down to 120 degrees F (50 degrees C).

### **Prevent Drowning**

- Never leave an infant or toddler in a bathtub alone—NEVER.
- Continuously supervise your baby around any water, including toilets and buckets. Infants can drown in a bucket that has water in it. Empty all water and store buckets turned over.

### **Avoid Falls**

- Make sure windows are closed or have screens that cannot be pushed out.
- Don't underestimate your child's ability to climb.
- Do not use walkers.

### **Prevent Poisoning**

- Keep all medicines, vitamins, cleaning fluids, and gardening chemicals locked away or disposed of safely.
- Install safety latches on cabinets.
- Keep the poison center number on all phones. The poison control number is 1-800-222-1222.
- Ask your doctor about syrup of Ipecac. Use it only if you are told to do so.

### **Avoid cuts**

- Remove or pad furniture with sharp corners.
- Keep sharp objects out of reach.

## Next Visit

Your baby's next routine visit should be at the age of 12 months. Please bring your shot card.

**Additional Health Resources**

Virtual Children's Hospital - [www.vh.org/vch](http://www.vh.org/vch)

<http://kidshealth.org>

[www.generalpediatrics.com](http://www.generalpediatrics.com)

Credits:

American Academy of Pediatrics

Pediatric Behavioral Health Advisor

[www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org)

Health Informatics - <http://uiowa.healthinformatics.net>

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