What You Need to Know: 9 Months Old

Feeding and Nutrition

- Many babies enjoy soft table foods and “Stage 3” foods. They are also feeding themselves more finger foods.
- Avoid giving any large pieces of food, popcorn, nuts, seeds, whole grapes, or hotdogs that may cause choking.
- If you are still breastfeeding, feed your baby 3-4 times a day, until your baby seems content. Continue prenatal vitamins while breastfeeding.
- If you breastfeed or partially breastfeed, the CDC recommends adding a vitamin D supplement. 400 IU/d of vitamin D is recommended and is available over the counter (i.e. Baby-D drops or Enfamil D.Vi. Sol).
- At 9 months, many babies reduce to 16-24 ounces per day as they advance their solid diet and go into a relatively slower growth phase.
- Do not give honey or corn syrup in the first year.
- Avoid giving your baby juice. Formula or breast milk is fine.
- You may want to introduce a sippy cup or cup at this time.
- Do not put your toddler to bed with a bottle of milk. This can lead to early tooth decay.
- Offer meals on a schedule. Have family meals-babies enjoy the social aspects of eating.
- Whole milk should be introduced around 12 months of age.
- Do not give your baby soft drinks, tea, or coffee.
- Do not force your baby to finish eating food. If she’s full, she may turn her head or lean back.

Sleep

The average baby sleeps 12-16 hours (including naps) per day at this age. It may be normal for your baby to sleep more or less than the average. Most babies take 2 naps per day. Your baby should be sleeping through the night without needing to be fed.

Development/Milestones

- Has favorite toys
- May be clingy with familiar adults
- Understands “no”
- Makes sounds like “mamamama” and “bababa”
- Uses fingers to point at things
- Looks for things that you hide
- Plays peek-a-boo
- Can pick up things like cereal between thumb and index finger
- Can get into a sitting position
- Crawls (or scoots)
- Stands holding on

Safety

- Always use a car seat made for an infant and place it **rear-facing** in the back seat until at least 2 years of age.
- Make sure to adjust the shoulder straps as your baby grows. They should be snug against the chest.
- Keep cleaning products, medications, plastic bags, and small objects away from your baby. Use cabinet locks, outlet covers, and safety gates as needed.
- In case of accidental ingestion or poisoning, or for free poison prevention information, call Poison Control at (800) 222-1222.
- Never leave your baby unattended on the bed, sofa, changing table, or in the bathtub.
- If you have a gun in the home, make sure it is in a locked safe, unloaded, and separate from ammunition.
- Never leave your baby unattended around standing water; empty buckets, pools, and tubs after use.
- If your baby is now standing up, make sure you drop the crib mattress down to its lowest level
- Avoid leaving your baby in the car alone, even for a minute.

Toys

Choose toys that are appropriate for your baby's age. Check for small or loose parts that could be a choking hazard. All toy pieces should be no smaller than 1-5/8 inches with no sharp or pointed edges. Avoid old painted toys that may contain lead.

Other Things….

- Do not give your baby a bottle with milk or juice while in bed - it can cause cavities.
- Brushing teeth with a soft toothbrush is appropriate. You should use a very small amount (like a grain of rice) of fluoride toothpaste on the brush.
- Protect from sun exposure with clothing, hat, shade, or an umbrella. Use a broad-spectrum, PABA-free sunscreen with at least SPF 30. Reapply frequently.
- Hold, talk, and sing to your baby.
- Read often with your baby. Reading promotes listening and brain development. It also gives you a chance to cuddle and bond with your baby.
- Shaking your baby may cause serious injury or death. Never shake a baby!
- Do not smoke around your baby - it may lead to respiratory problems and allergies.
- If you need help with medication dosing, please check out our website or click here.

Vaccines Given at Your Child's Next Well Visit (12 months)

- MMR
- Varicella
- Hepatitis A

Suggested Reading

"What to Expect the First Year"

"Your Child's Sleep (Healthychildren.org)"

"Your child, Birth to 5 years (AAP)"

Sample Menu for 8-12 Months

Useful Websites

www.canyonviewpediatrics.com

www.cdc.gov/vaccines

www.aap.org

www.seatcheck.org

www.healthychildren.org