

# **Sanford Pediatrics, PA**

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## **4th WELL CHILD VISIT**

### **5-8 Months**

#### **Suggested Diet:**

Breast milk or iron fortified formula are still extremely important elements in your baby's diet. Amounts taken will decrease as baby takes more solid foods. You should give baby two meals a day at this time, advancing to three meals a day. You may feed strained baby foods but pureed table foods can also be offered as long as the texture does not cause the baby to gag. Strained meats may also be offered now. A suggested order includes lamb, veal, chicken, turkey, beef, ham and pork.

#### **Feeding Reminders:**

- Keep baby on breast milk or formula until 12 months of age. They are an important source of iron to prevent anemia. Do not substitute regular cow's milk.
- When introducing new foods, be sure to only add one new food at a time. Allow 3 to 4 days before another new food so that you will know which item caused the reaction. If a reaction such as rash, do not try that food again for at least one month.
- It is important to know what is in jars of baby food you buy. A jar of baby meat-vegetable will contain more meat than vegetables and vice versa. Sometimes it is better to buy separate jars of meats and vegetables and mix them to a baby's taste in a bowl before feeding.
- As baby approaches the age of 8 months, he/she will be better able to feed with a cup. If breast feeding and you decide to wean at this time, try weaning directly to the cup rather than to the bottle.
- Expect feeding time to be very messy, especially as baby learns new skills. Placing a newspaper under his/her high chair to catch what falls, aids in clean-up.
- At about 7-8 months, the infant may be able to handle certain finger foods. Beware of choking hazards with these items, however, and never give such foods with baby unattended.
- Try to avoid the temptation of feeding desserts such as pudding, cake and cookies or very sweet drinks such as punches and soft drinks. These items lead to increase tooth decay and provide little nutritional value. Also, try not to add salt to baby's diet.

## **Development:**

Baby can or soon will

- Roll over both ways, front to back and back to front
- Scoot around on stomach or back
- Sit with or without support
- Reach for objects and transfer them hand to hand
- Bring feet to mouth
- Cry when left alone
- Recognize and perhaps show fear of strangers
- Show feelings of pleasure or eagerness

## **Bowels and Bladder:**

Bowel movements may begin to be more regular and predictable. Bladder capacity may be larger and thus baby will wet fewer diapers per day.

## **Playtime:**

- Choose toys carefully. Avoid toys with small parts which could become unattached and possibly choke the infant. Select only soft, rounded, unbreakable toys made of wood or strong plastic.
- Encourage playtime alone as well as with others. Play peek-a-boo, pat-a-cake or try play in front of a mirror.
- Parents need playtime too. Infants at this age sometimes become frightened when left with a babysitter. If possible, try to let the infant get to know the sitter while the parents are there. This may ease the transition.

## **Safety:**

Now that the infant is scooting around and exploring his/her environment, parents must be aware of and limit the possibilities of accidents in the home. Remember, no matter how safe parents think the home is, the infant needs constant watching! If the parents are too busy to watch the baby carefully, the infant must be placed in his/her crib or playpen.

- Breakable objects on the floor and low furniture should be removed.
- Cover all electric outlets or place furniture over outlets to prevent the infant's access to them.
- Remove tablecloths, dangling electric cords, and window blind cords from baby's reach.
- As above, choose toys without sharp edges or small removable parts.
- Never leave the baby alone in the bathtub, not even for a second!
- Keep all detergents, soaps, household cleaners, medications and poisons out of reach or locked away in cabinets.
- Many household plants are toxic. Remove all household plants from reach.

- In the case of toxic ingestion, always call the Poison Control number immediately 1-800-848-6946. Do NOT use Ipecac to induce vomiting unless instructed by Poison Control.
- We discourage the use of infant walkers. Walkers can be very dangerous because they increase the infant's speed and mobility. Walkers also raise the baby to a higher level, enabling him/her to reach objects not ordinarily in reach. Many infants are injured by falling down stairs in the walker. Walkers can also delay infant motor development rather than enhance their skills.
- To avoid scalding accidents, set your hot water heater thermostat to 120 degrees. Always test bathwater temperature before immersing the baby in it.
- Turn pot handles away from the front of the oven so that the baby cannot reach them. Do not carry the infant if you are also carrying a hot drink.
- Use gates on stairways and across windows.
- Always place the baby in a crash-tested safety seat when riding in the car. The safest place is rear facing in the middle of the back seat. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that they remain rear facing until 2 years of age.
- Do not smoke around your infant. Second hand cigarette smoke has been proven to cause babies to be sick with upper respiratory infections more often and with increased risk of childhood asthma and allergies.
- A toddler can fall into a toilet and drown. Always lock bathroom doors or place gates.

### **Sleep Problems:**

Try to establish a regular bedtime for baby. Try to plan for quiet time during the 30 or so minutes before bed.

If the infant awakens during the night, try to help him/her go back to sleep but have as little interaction with the infant as possible. Avoid feeding during the night if at all possible. Babies this age do not need middle of the night feedings for their nutrition and only take a night bottle or breast feed out of habit. If you find you must feed the infant during the night, only put water in the bottle and only a very small amount. Try not to even pick the baby up but rather speak gently to him/her and rub his/her back. Attempt to establish a "security device" such as a stuffed animal or blanket which the infant can find in the crib to help with going back to sleep.

### **Teething:**

Active teething will most likely get underway at this age. However, do not be worried if your baby does not cut teeth even until 12 months of age as this can be normal.

Teething can cause low grade temperatures (101 or less), crying, and looser stools. Do not attribute high temperatures (101 or higher) or severe diarrhea to teething. Offer a cold clean dish cloth or teething ring for comfort. Acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Advil/Motrin) is probably the best medicines to offer for the pain if needed.

**Immunizations:**

Your child will receive vaccinations today. Please review the information given to you and feel free to ask questions.

Some infants may be a little fussier after vaccines. Extra holding, rocking and soothing will help. Others may have a low grade fever. Ask your pediatrician or nurse for proper Tylenol (acetaminophen) dosing based on your infant's weight. Ibuprofen based products (Advil, Motrin) may also be used after 6 months of age. For a swollen shot site, a warm wet cloth applied several times a day as a compress may help.

**When to Call the Doctor:**

- If your baby is fretful or irritable for more than 24 hours.
- If your baby's fever (100.5 or higher) lasts longer than 24-48 hours.
- If your baby screams inconsolably for more than 3 hours.
- If your baby is listless and not feeding well.
- If your baby has vomiting or diarrhea.
- If you are worried that your baby is "just not right".

**Next Visit:**

We would like to see your baby again in 3 months (9 months of age).