

Sanford Pediatrics, PA

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5th WELL CHILD VISIT

9-12 Months

Feedings:

- You should still offer baby infant formula or breast milk at this age. Both provide vitamins and iron in easily digestible form. Infant should not switch to whole food until typically 12 months of age. You will probably notice a significant decreased in your baby's milk intake as he/she takes more and more solids - this is normal for this age.
- Feed the baby three meals a day, just like the rest of the family. You may notice a decrease in his/her appetite as he/she gets older. This is to be expected, since rate of growth slows at this age and thus metabolic demands lessen. Also, infants at this age become more active and are less interested in eating.
- If trying to wean from nursing, attempt to wean directly to the cup instead of the bottle. This will save you trouble down the road in trying to wean from the bottle.
- Permit the infant to finger feed; be prepared for big messes by placing newspaper on the floor beneath the high chair.
- The same foods the rest of the family eats can be the infant's main diet with a few exceptions. Avoid highly spiced or deep-fat-fried foods. Try not to add a lot of salt to the infant's food so as not to develop unhealthy taste preferences early in life.
- Do not feed the baby nuts, fruits with seeds or pits, raisins, round foods like grapes or hot dogs, stringy vegetables, raw carrots, popcorn, hard candy or gum. All of the listed foods are major choking hazards!
- Cook table foods until very soft and then mash or chop them very finely. The infant can chew these foods whether he/she has teeth or not.
- It is time to introduce the cup, usually a sippy cup with a lid. If the child is still on the bottle, do not let the infant sleep with the nipple in his/her mouth as this can lead to tooth decay. Do not allow bottles in their crib. Aim toward total wean off the bottle by no later than 12 months.
- Resist feeding the baby desserts, since these have added sugar that the infant does not need.
- Many babies are still on entirely strained baby foods at this age. Do not be worried if the infant refuses table foods because of the different taste or texture. Be patient with the child and realize there is no rush to introduce table foods.

Development:

Baby can or soon will --

- pull him/herself up to a stand by holding onto furniture
- "cruise" by side stepping around while holding onto furniture
- get him/herself to the sitting position by him/herself and maintain the sitting position
- repeat sounds that parents make
- say "mama" or "dada"
- wave "bye-bye"
- understand his/her own name
- use the index finger and thumb to pick up objects
- show fear of strangers

Bowels:

Baby's bowel movements may be more and more regular since solids are becoming a greater and greater proportion of his/her diet. However, infants are not ready for toilet-training attempts until close to 2 years of age.

Playtime:

- Encourage your baby to imitate the sounds he/she hears.
- Play games such as peek-a-boo, pat-a-cake and bye-bye with baby. The infant may also enjoy playing games such as covering a toy with a cloth and letting the infant look for it. Show the baby his/her body parts such as parts of the face.
- Toys selected for the baby should be large enough to not present a choking hazard. Choose toys which encourage active play such as nesting or stacking toys.
- Parents need playtime too. When leaving the infant with a sitter, be sure to allow time for the infant to get to know the sitter before you leave to ease the transition.

Sleep problems:

- Getting the baby to go to sleep can become a problem at this age. Be sure to allow for a "cooling down" time before bed of about 30-60 minutes. Try to establish a regular bedtime ritual such as bath, then a story or drink of water, then to bed.
- It is alright to rock the infant to aid in putting him/her to sleep but try to transfer to the crib while he/she is still awake but sleepy. This will aid in getting the infant to be able to put him/herself back to sleep when he/she awakens in the middle of the night.
- Middle of the night awakening is extremely common at this age. If it becomes a problem in your house, try to deal with it in the following ways
- Be sure the infant is actually awake before going to check on him/her; let one or two minutes go by to give the baby a chance to go back to sleep on his/her own.
- If you are sure the baby is awake, try to make your intervention to help him/her get back to sleep as minimal as possible.
- Try not to even pick the baby up to comfort him/her, but instead just gently rub his/her back and help him/her find a blanket, stuffed animal or pacifier to aid in returning to sleep.

- Try to avoid feeding in the middle of the night since the baby does not need a night feeding for his/her nutrition. If the baby insists on a feeding, try making it something like water in the bottle.
- Try to avoid putting the child in your bed as this establishes a habit which can be extremely hard to break.
- If you are having terrible sleep problems with your baby, always feel free to discuss the issue with your doctor. Each family situation is different and sometimes the solutions to such problems can require innovative approaches
- Be sure the mattress in the baby's crib is low enough to prevent him/her from climbing out of the crib.

Safety:

Now that your baby is crawling or walking, you must be aware of and limit the possibilities for accidents in the home.

- Remove breakable or valuable objects from low tables or shelves.
- Cover electrical outlets or place large pieces of furniture in front of outlets. Remove tablecloths, window blind cords and dangling electrical cords from baby's reach.
- _ Choose toys carefully. Avoid toys with small or removable parts that can be swallowed.
- _ Keep all detergents, soaps, household cleaners, medications and poisons out of reach and locked in cabinets. Remove household plants from reach also as some of them have toxic parts.
- In case of accidental poisoning, always call Poison Control Center at 1-800-848-6946.
- To avoid scalding accidents, set your hot water heater temperature to 120 degrees.
- Never leave baby alone in the tub, not even for a second!
- Turn handles of skillets or pots away from the front of the stove.
- Use gates on stairways, doorways and open windows. Enclose space heaters or kerosene heaters with protective fences.
- Always use an approved infant car seat when taking baby for a ride, even short rides around the block. State law requires that all children be buckled into a federally crash tested and approved care seat. They should remain rear facing until 2 years of age per American Academy of Pediatric recommendations.
- If there are firearms (guns) in the house, keep them out of reach, unloaded and locked up.
- Do not smoke around your baby. Inhalation or passive smoke has been proven to increase incidence of respiratory infections and asthma.

Teething and dental care:

- Teething can cause a slight temperature (no more than 101 degrees), a runny nose from increased crying and looser than normal stools. Do not attribute high fever or severe diarrhea to teething.
- Treat teething pain with acetaminophen (Tylenol) or cold teething rings. Medicines like orajel or hurricane jelly are not recommended.
- Brush your baby's teeth twice a day with a toothbrush.

- If you have well water that is not fluorinated, ask your doctor about possible need for fluoride supplement prescription.
- Remember not to allow baby to sleep with a bottle in his/her mouth or crib.

Shoes:

Invest in the cheapest shoes which will cover baby's feet and provide traction. There is a no need to buy expensive hard soled shoes since the infant will outgrow them quickly. A simple sneaker or sandal will do.

Discipline and limit setting:

Discipline is a way of teaching your child how to gain self-control, respect other's rights and learn the rules that govern our society. Instilling these ideals in your child will be the most difficult but at the same time most important job you must do.

Nine months of age is a good time to establish strategies to accomplish the above goals because even at this young age, most infants will begin to test the limits parents have established for them. If a parent waits too long to begin the limit-setting process, the child may have already gained control of the household.

- "Time out" is the best method to use to set limits and achieve discipline. This works much better than spankings or other forms of physical punishments because it is easy to be consistent with the "time out" method. Consistency is really the key to good parenting. The child will learn right from wrong only if he/she knows what your response to his actions will be every time. It is very important that both parents and any other adults that care for the child agree on the methods to be used for limit setting so the child does not get mixed messages. Most children may not understand time out till closer to 18 months but it is good to establish limits even at this age.
- Always remember to consistently praise the baby for good behavior! Children seem to learn the behaviors that parents prefer much more quickly than those behaviors parents disapprove of. Remember, in most cases, children actually want to please us and only misbehave frequently if you fail to set limits and do not make your feelings clearly known.
- The child will test your limit-setting by being defiant and throwing temper tantrums. Deal with these behaviors by using time out as your child developmentally starts to understand the concept. Ignoring tantrums is the best method. If you do give the child his/her way, the tantrums will continue and get worse as he/she gets older.

Next visit:

We would like to see your child age 12 months of age