

Well-child checkup: 6 months

Child's name: _____ Date: _____ Height: _____ Weight: _____

Immunizations received: _____

Next visit: _____ Immunizations needed: _____

Remember to bring your baby's vaccine record with you.

Your six-month-old is busier every day. You will see many new skills over the next few months. This sheet is meant to answer some common questions parents have about this age.

Nutrition

Your baby should take breast milk or formula with iron 4 times a day. Babies are more distracted at this age, and may not seem as interested.

When your baby is ready, start giving pureed foods (very mashed and smooth), one at a time, in small amounts, and in this order:

- baby cereals (rice, barley, oat, Cream of Wheat®)
- fruits (plain)
- vegetables (plain)
- meats (plain)

Add one new food every 5 to 7 days. Watch for signs of food sensitivity such as vomiting, diarrhea, hives, or wheezing after each change. Avoid fruit desserts and meat/vegetable combination dinners.

After eating pureed foods for a while, many babies are ready to begin a few soft finger foods such as:

- banana pieces
- teething biscuits
- soft crackers

Avoid fish, eggs, citrus juices, and cow's milk because of possible allergies. Babies should not have cow's milk during the first year of life.

Diaper changes

Stools will be more colorful and change in firmness as more foods are included.

Sleeping

Morning and afternoon naps are still common at this age.

Some babies still wake for a nighttime feeding.

To help your baby begin to develop good sleeping habits:

- develop a bedtime routine that you stick to every night.
- put your baby down in a quiet, dark, or dimly lit room.
- put your baby to bed when tired but not fully asleep.

Development

Babies develop at their own rate. In the next few months, you may notice that your baby can:

- enjoy simple games (pat-a-cake, peek-a-boo).
- sit without support.
- begin to crawl.
- stand with support.
- bang objects together.
- enjoy praise and applause.
- imitate people.
- show signs of fear about things such as baths, heights, and unfamiliar people.

Learning through play

Talk to your baby a lot. When you look at books together, point to, name, and describe the pictures. Read to your baby every day.

Safety

Safety is very important as your baby gets around more easily now.

Use an infant car seat every time your child rides in a car. It's the law and car seats save lives. Keep using the infant car seat in the back seat and rear-facing until your baby is at least 1 year old **and** weighs at least 20 pounds.

Never leave your baby alone in the car, even for a few minutes.

Use sunscreen (SPF 15 or higher) when baby is in the sun.

Use a safety gate to block stairways. Always close doors that lead to stairs.

Keep baby out of the kitchen if the stove or oven is on.

Lower the crib mattress so your baby won't climb or fall out. Always keep crib rails in the highest position.

Do not use walkers. Falls are common and injuries can be serious. Walkers can also delay the development of walking skills.

Many common plants are poisonous, so keep them out of reach.

Store cleaning supplies and harmful substances out of reach or behind locked doors to prevent poisoning or injury.

Keep the poison control number by the phone (1-800-222-1222).

Have smoke detectors in working order.

Are you and your children safe in your home? Please talk to your doctor, nurse practitioner, or social worker if you have any concerns about safety for you or your child.

Positive parenting

Parenting is the biggest job you'll ever do. Support and information are important. Be sure to reach out for help when you need to. Talk to your health care provider about concerns you have about your child's behavior. See the booklet, *Positive Discipline*, available on Children's Website.

Preventing illness

Make sure everyone in the family washes his hands:

- before **and** after preparing food, eating, or feeding your child.
- before **and** after using the bathroom or changing a diaper.

Don't smoke in the home or car.

Check for chipping paint. Make sure painted surfaces are lead-free. Lead particles can also be found in household dust and outside soil. To help prevent your baby from swallowing lead, wash hands and face often, especially before eating or drinking.

When should I call the clinic?

- rectal temperature higher than 100.4° F
- you are worried about your baby
- trouble breathing – **call 911**

Questions?

This sheet is not specific to your child, but provides general information. If you have any questions or concerns, many resources are available to help you.

Resources at Children’s of Minnesota

Minneapolis clinic (612) 813-6107
St. Paul clinic (651) 220-6700

Breastfeeding Resource Center

Minneapolis (612) 813-7654
St. Paul (651) 220-6250

Family Resource Center (health, parenting, and community resource library)

Minneapolis (612) 813-6816
St. Paul (651) 220-6368

Parent Warmline (612) 813-6336
(child development and behavior)

Web site www.childrensmn.org

(includes information about visiting Children’s, articles about illnesses, parenting information, and Children’s Medical Organizer—a free easy-to-use Web site to help organize your family’s medical history)

Community resources

2-1-1 Phone Helpline (confidential information and referral to thousands of community services) dial 2-1-1, or (651) 291-0211

Child safety seat inspections (free) (information about the nearest location) 1-866-SEAT-CHECK www.seatcheck.org

Early Childhood Family Education (classes about raising young children) Call your local school district.

Minnesota Tobacco Helpline (for help to quit smoking) 1-888-354-PLAN (1-888-354-7526)

Poison Control Center
toll-free number: 1-800-222-1222

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Patient/Family Education
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