

Well-child check up: 9 months

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

Immunizations received: _____

Next visit: _____ Immunizations needed: _____

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

Your baby is getting more active every day. This sheet is meant to answer some common questions parents have about this age.

Nutrition

Most babies will still be breastfeeding or taking a bottle at this age. There is no fixed age at which a baby should be weaned. Babies should continue to have breast milk or formula until at least one year of age.

Many babies will be ready for "junior" baby foods now. They may also enjoy other soft foods such as canned fruit, cheese, gelatin (such as Jell-O®), mashed potatoes, pudding, and yogurt. Your baby may also like finger foods such as banana pieces, Cheerios®, and well-cooked vegetables.

- Always introduce foods slowly, one new food every 3 to 4 days.
- Offer liquids from a cup.
- Expect mealtime to be messy.

To prevent tooth decay, **never** let your baby go to bed with a bottle that contains anything but plain water.

Let your baby play with a spoon at mealtimes. Picking up finger foods and trying to use a spoon helps develop fine motor skills and gives experience with different textures in hands and mouth.

Clean your baby's teeth every day with a soft toothbrush or a clean, soft cloth around your finger (no toothpaste is needed). Your child should begin seeing a dentist for regular check ups by the first birthday. Ask your dentist to show you how to floss your child's teeth.

Diaper changes

Most babies will have 4 to 6 wet diapers and 1 to 2 soft bowel movements each day.

Sleeping

Babies should now be sleeping for 6 to 8 hours at night and taking a morning and afternoon nap. A bedtime routine each night helps them know when it is time for sleep.

Growth and development

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

- pull up to a standing position and may walk along furniture.
- crawl forward or backward on hands and knees.
- pick up small objects with thumb and finger.
- say "mama" and "dada" and babble a lot.
- not want to be separated from parent.
- be shy when meeting a new person.
- use a cup to drink.

Learning through play

- Read a story or play a game with your baby every day (pat-a-cake, rhymes, books, songs).
- Your baby may enjoy putting objects such as blocks, balls, or socks into plastic containers, and taking them out again.

Safety

Keeping your baby safe as he begins to explore is very important.

Do not give hard foods like nuts, raisins, or popcorn to your baby. Always keep small objects out of the reach of your child. These can cause choking. Make sure your baby is safely secured in a high chair when eating.

The American Academy of Pediatricians recommends that children use a rear-facing car seat up to at least one-year of age **and** 20 pounds. If your child weighs 20 pounds before age one, switch to a convertible seat that holds up to 30 to 35 pounds in a rear-facing position.

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

Always stay with your baby when on high places.

Water can be dangerous. Stay with your baby in or near a bathtub, wading pool, or any other water. Babies can drown in as little as one inch of water.

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

Always keep crib rails in the highest position.

Keep all medicines, cleaning supplies, and household chemicals put away in high places and out of your baby's reach.

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

Cover electric outlets with protective plastic covers.

Keep baby away from hot stove and oven doors. Keep hot liquids away from edges of counters and tables.

Use child safety catches on most drawers and cupboards. One cabinet of plastic containers or pots and pans can be left unlocked for your child to explore.

Use safety gates to block stairways.

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

Nine to 12 months is usually a delightful period as your baby becomes more sociable and enjoys new experiences. Babies of this age are curious and want to explore their world.

- Don't worry about spoiling your baby with too much attention.
- Talk, smile, and sing to baby often.
- Say "No" only when your baby is in real danger. At other times, distract with a fun and safe toy or activity.

See the booklet, *Positive Discipline*, available on Children's Website.

Preventing illness

Make sure everyone in the family washes 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.

Your baby will be tested for lead at nine months and yearly until age six. 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
- if you are worried about your child
- 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, illnesses, and parenting, as well as 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.

Early Childhood Special Education (screening and services for children with developmental delay or disability) Call your county.

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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