

## Well Baby Visit: 9 months

Welcome to the 9 month visit! So much is happening with your baby right now. The brain is developing new connections, and language skills are blossoming. He or she is moving around everywhere – crawling and trying to pull up to standing – maybe even trying to walk. Your baby is eating regular foods, in addition to drinking breast milk or formula.

Usually there are no vaccines during this visit, unless your baby needs a flu vaccine or needs to catch up on any missed shots. This is also an important age for seeing how your child is growing and developing. If there are concerns about how your baby is doing, the earlier we do something to help, the better it is for your child.

### Growth and Development

At this age, babies should be able to sit up on their own for at least 60 seconds. They can bear weight on their legs when held upright by a parent, may pull to a stand, and even try to walk.

They can stretch out their arms to reach for things. Babies can pass things from hand to hand and can pick things up by using a “raking” motion with their hands. They can hold two objects, one in each hand. Babies at 9 months can feed themselves a cookie or cracker, and should be able to help hold the bottle during feedings.

They can make sounds similar to "mama" and "dada," and can respond to quiet noises.

Continue to read to your baby as much as possible, point to pictures, and speak slowly, as this is a very important time for language development.

### Nutrition

- Your baby will already be fitting into your family's eating schedule and will be eating family food at the table or in a high chair (Picture 1).
- Continue breast milk and/or iron-fortified formula until your baby is 1 year old (12 months). If you wish to give juice to your baby, it should be 100% fruit or vegetable juice, and no more than 3 ounces per day, from a cup.
- Vegetables and fruits should be given at every meal, plus be given as snacks.



**Picture 1** Baby can sit in a high chair and learn to drink from a cup

*Nutrition continued on Page 2*

## **Nutrition, *continued***

- Do not give juice in a bottle.
- Offer a wide variety of finger and table foods that are soft and easy to chew.
- You may need to offer a food more than 10 times before your baby may like it. Wait a few days or a few weeks to try again, if your baby will not eat something the first time.
- Avoid using food as a reward, or bribing your baby with food to get him or her to do something.
- Always stay with your baby when he or she is eating. Do **not** give your baby foods that are easy to choke on. Examples of foods that can get caught in the throat are popcorn, round candy, nuts, grapes, and round slices of hot dogs. Cut finger foods into small shapes like triangles – **not** round.

Your baby should no longer be waking up in the middle of the night to eat. If your baby wants a bottle or a snack during the night, be clear that it is not time for food. While weaning them off overnight bottles or food, some babies may cry a lot. This is normal, but will get better over time. Be patient and persistent. If you are having trouble with this, talk with your child's doctor.

## **Safety**

It is time to fully "baby-proof" your home! Here are some tips to keep your baby safe:

- Get down on the floor to check for hazards at baby's eye level.
- Keep toys with small parts, plastic bags, strings, cords, and balloons out of reach
- Keep heavy objects and hot liquids away from the edges of counters and tables.
- Put plain plastic outlet covers in all electrical sockets.
- Put poisons, medicines, and cleaning supplies away in high, locked cabinets
- Install safety gates above and below stairs, and do **not** use walkers.

## **About this Helping Hand**

At each visit, your doctor will talk with you about your baby's development, growth, and safety so that your baby grows up healthy. These handouts will help to remind you about the things your doctor will talk with you about at each visit. If you have any questions or concerns about your baby, please ask. We are here to help!

Other Helping Hands that may be useful:

*Child Passenger Safety*, HH-IV-14

*Temperature: Oral, Rectal and Axillary*, HH-II-27

*Home Safety for Infants and Toddlers*, HH-IV-73