

INFANT CARE: 9 months

Drs. Padgett, Bell, Thomas

PEDIATRIC ASSOCIATES

2300 Ferry, Lafayette

Play is baby's work

What an exciting time in the life of your baby! She can babble using *b* and *d* sounds—often saying *Dada* for many things. Mom, do not feel bad if *Mama* takes awhile! He will pay attention to your speech and may try to imitate words. She will jabber in sentences. He will learn what *no* means and may shake his head. When she wants to, she can sit up; get on her stomach or back at will; and wriggle, crawl, or roll about the room. He will pick up an object in each hand and bang them together. She will learn to let go of objects voluntarily, and will put them in and out of containers. He will pick up small objects with his thumb and index or middle fingers (pincer grasp).

By a year of age, your baby will be pulling up to stand next to everything. She will cruise, try to reach everything within arm's length and climb on any short object. Some babies will take steps on their own, but others may not.

As a contrast to all his exploration, separation anxiety may be very apparent now. He may not want you to leave her even with his other parent! When you leave the room, she will cry as if you have abandoned her. Because she knows that when you are out of sight, you still exist, she will also love to play peek-a-boo and enjoy toys that appear and disappear. Balls, rolled-up socks, pans, measuring cups, blocks, nesting toys, and toys with buttons or switches that make something happen encourage her curiosity and development. He will be constantly on the move, testing every object he can to see how it tastes, how it falls, shakes, or rolls. He will love books because he can turn the pages (and eat them), and love paper because it makes noise. She will start to learn the function of some toys—a toy phone goes up next to her ear as your phone does. Keep talking and singing to him!

Feeding

Your baby can chew chopped foods whether he has teeth or not. Continue to offer soft food. Table foods should be low in sugar and salt. Please limit preservatives and artificial colors or sweeteners. Encourage variety. Try to feed at least two food groups at a meal (try for several different colors of food).

Feed her 3 meals and 2–3 snacks. Now your baby will eat a lot, but you want to be ready for when he/she does not. So offer good, healthy food and allow him/her to choose from them.

Sit down and eat together. Do not encourage grazing all through the day, as this may lead to problems at night (his body will not be used to time without food, so he may need night feedings) and poor eating habits.

Introduce the spoon.

Remember, feeding time will be messy!

Encourage the cup—your baby should be off the bottle by one year.

She needs 24 ounces of formula/breast milk a day, and this is a priority over other liquids. (Before starting whole milk, discuss this with your pediatrician.) Have your baby sit down on your lap, the floor, or her chair for a drink instead of taking the cup or bottle around with him. Neither should be in bed with her.

Some finger foods to try:

Small pieces of cooked shredded chicken

Small pieces of cooked hamburger

Flakes of cooked fish or shrimp

Banana, peaches, pears, apricots, blueberries, strawberries, watermelon

Seedless grapes, peeled and cut up

Cooked vegetables like peas, green beans, carrots, broccoli florets, cauliflower, squash

Dry cereal like Cheerios (not sugar coated)

Toast, French toast, pancakes, waffles (baby will like these plain), muffins, pasta, noodles

Bite sized sandwiches

Boiled sweet potatoes or brown rice

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Do not feed:

Honey, until at least one year of age

Hot, spicy food

Hard candy, popcorn, nuts

Chewy, tough, stringy food

Raw meat or raw eggs

Safety

Review your medicines, cleaning supplies, perfumes, after-shave, make-up, etc.

Anything that you do not need, throw away.

Anything that you do need, lock up.

Post & enter in your phones:

Poison Control Center's number:

1-800-222-1222

Your crawler will soon be a climber. He will be able to pick up the smallest speck of dust, and everything will go into his mouth! She will explore everything, even electric outlets, and may try to fit objects into them—please cover them. He will pull himself up to stand on anything dangling, including cords attached to lamps, toasters, or curling irons! Never leave a curling iron unattended! She will enjoy opening drawers and cupboards and emptying them. Again, everything he finds will eventually go to his mouth! You may need a new place for coins and other small objects as well as breakable objects. Be sure her crib is as low as possible and no cords are nearby. Please remove bumper pads and other objects that he can use to climb out of the crib.

The kitchen is dangerous! Put her in her high chair, playpen or another room when the stove or electrical appliances (eg. coffeepot, crockpot, iron, deep-fat fryer) are on.

Guard stairs and railings with gates.

Keep your baby in the car seat in the back seat facing backwards until 2 years of age.

If he goes bike riding, he needs to wear a helmet. He will be safest in a buggy that can be attached to your bike that will not tip over if the bicycle does.

Never leave her in the bathtub alone. She can drown in an inch of water.

Be careful during diaper changes as he will twist and move and may fall off a high surface. You may want to consider the floor or another location. You can give her an object to hold in each hand or play peek-a-boo to make diapering easier.

Don't forget **sunscreen** (with both UVA and UVB protection) when you go outside. You may want to try sunglasses, as long as they have UV protection. Consider insect repellent in the summer.

Separation

Separations may be hard because your baby will react to them strongly. She may cry and cling to you or reach for you after you have given her to someone else (even her other parent). Sometimes this is a difficult time for you as a parent because your baby is both clinging and testing limits. For you, life can seem to be reduced to work and baby with little time to be alone or together as a couple. Sometimes parents can become jealous of the baby for the spouse's attention, and even jealous of the babysitter.

Be assured that your baby will know that you love her and even become very secure if you do leave her and return. Always announce your intentions and say goodbye before you leave him in competent care. You may want to have her sitter be someone she knows to make this easier for both of you.

You may introduce a cuddly object and take it everywhere with baby, including your cuddling times. Then, when you are gone, your baby will have this to hold.

It is important to schedule time for your spouse without your baby. You all will be better for these occasions.

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Immunizations

Your baby should be finished with the initial series of immunizations. If your baby has missed any of the initial series, a dose may be given today. Booster doses of the initial series start at 1 year and can be given anytime before 18 months. The MMR (measles-mumps-rubella) and Varivax (chickenpox) vaccines can be given at 12-15 months.

Illnesses

Colds are common now, especially if baby is with other children. Expect 1-2 per month. Good handwashing can halt the spread of infections. Antibacterial soap and cleaning agents are not needed as they may kill too many bacteria and leave room for “super-bacteria” to grow!

Fever helps the body to fight infections. Infants and children may run fevers of 104°F from a fairly insignificant illness!

Do not worry about the FEVER, worry about how your baby is ACTING! Fussy, but otherwise busy babies with a high fever are not as sick as listless, crying babies with a low-grade fever!

So, DO NOT GIVE TYLENOL OR IBUPROFEN just because your child has a fever. Give tylenol if the fever is > 102°F or your baby is very uncomfortable. Encourage fluids, dress lightly and stay close to home.

Acetaminophen:

Ibuprofen:

Remember, ibuprofen should not be given on an empty stomach.

Shoes are for protection and warmth. They are not necessary and will not help your baby to walk. If you buy shoes, they should be flexible and fit well. Buy new pairs often if needed.