



SIX MONTH VISIT Anticipatory Guidance

Safety

- **Car Seat Safety.**
 - Use a rear facing car seat in the back seat of your vehicle. Read more about car seat safety at healthychildren.org and the [CDC](http://www.cdc.gov).
- **Safe Sleep and Prevention of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome**
 - Your baby should sleep in your room for at least the first 6 months
 - Place your baby **alone** in the crib without any bumpers, loose blankets, or toys
 - Place your baby on his **back to sleep** until he is able to roll himself over.
 - Place your baby to sleep in his own **crib** or other safe sleep surface with a **firm, flat mattress** such as a bassinet or pack and play.
 - Avoid tobacco exposure. Keep your car and home smoke-free.
- **It is safe to use sunscreen (at least SPF 30) as needed.** Use hats, sun shirts, and shade for protection and avoid excessive sun exposure.
- **Home Safety.** Your baby will soon begin crawling and pulling to stand.
 - It's time to lower the crib mattress
 - Secure any loose cords and avoid baby monitor or window cords within reach of the crib.
 - Use gates by the stairs and barriers around space heaters or other hazards.
 - Cover electrical outlets.
 - Make sure TVs, furniture, and other heavy items are secure so your child can't pull them over.
 - Remove small items from your baby's reach as she will put everything in her mouth. Magnets and button batteries are especially dangerous if ingested.
 - Keep medications and cleaning supplies locked and out of reach.
 - Baby walkers are not recommended due to risk of falls and delayed development.
 - Don't leave baby alone in the tub, near water, or on high places such as changing tables, beds, and sofas.
 - Program the phone number to Poison Control in your phone. 1-800-222-1222

Health

- **A fever is no longer an emergency. If your baby is lethargic, extremely irritable, has labored breathing, or isn't eating, call us right away.** If your baby's temperature comes down some with Tylenol or Motrin and they seem comfortable and happy, you can treat symptoms at home. Call for an appointment if the fever lasts more than 2 or 3 days or if you notice concerning symptoms.
- **Dental Health**
 - Try not to share spoons with your baby or use your mouth to clean the baby's pacifier as you can pass bacteria that cause cavities to your baby.
 - Clean your baby's teeth (as soon as you see the first tooth) with a soft cloth or toothbrush and a small smear of fluoride toothpaste (no more than a grain of rice).
- **For after-hours emergencies, you can reach the provider on call at 252-499-6012.**

Feeding

- It is normal for baby's growth to slow down after 6 months.
- Feed your baby breastmilk or iron-fortified formula. It is ok to give a few ounces of water per day if desired. Do not give cow's milk to drink until after your baby's first birthday.
- Introduce a cup, straw cup or sippy cup over the next 3 months.
- **Start solid foods when your baby is ready. Signs of readiness include:**
 - Sits with support
 - Good head and neck control
 - Shows interest in the foods you eat
 - Opens his mouth for a spoon
 - Does not push everything out with his tongue when fed (no longer has tongue thrust reflex)
- **Food choices**
 - **Avoid honey** until after the first birthday due to the risk of botulism.
 - Avoid foods that are choking hazards like large pieces of food, nuts, popcorn, whole grapes, or whole pieces of hot dog.
 - It's ok to start with a vegetable, fruit, cereal, or pureed meat
 - Introduce only one new food at a time at first.
 - It is ok to start with purees or try baby-led weaning. If you start with purees, begin transitioning to finger foods when your baby develops a pincher grasp.
 - Incorporate iron rich foods daily like pureed meats, iron-fortified cereals, beans, lentils, dark leafy greens, and nut butters.
 - Start feeding solids 1-2 times per day and increase to 3 times per day over the next few months. Let your baby decide how much to eat.
 - Introduce allergenic foods early (before 12 months of age) as this helps PREVENT food allergies. These foods include eggs, peanut butter, dairy, soy, fish, and shellfish.
 - Offer a variety of foods. It may take 10 to 15 tries before your baby likes a new food.
- **Breastfeeding**
 - Change from Vitamin D to a **Multivitamin with Iron** until your baby is eating iron rich foods very well. Some options include Novaferum Yum! Multivitamin with Iron or Poly-vi-sol with Iron.
 - Your baby's breastmilk intake may decrease some over the next 3 months as she eats more foods.
- **Formula feeding**
 - Typically, babies this age drink 28-32 ounces per day. Formula intake will decrease over the next 3 months as your baby eats more solid foods.
 - Extra Vitamin D and iron are already added to formula so no supplement is needed.
 - Always hold your baby's bottle, never prop it.
 - Do not give your baby a bottle while in the crib.

Development

- Place your baby so she is sitting up and can look around.
- Talk with your baby by copying the sounds she makes.
- Look at and read books together.
- Play games such as peekaboo, patty-cake, and so big.
- Try not to have the TV on in the background or use a TV or screen to calm your baby.
- If your baby is fussy, give her safe toys to hold and put in her mouth.
- Make sure she is getting regular naps and playtimes.

Caring for your Family

- Talk with us if you have questions about childcare.
- Choose mature, trained, responsible babysitters and caregivers.
- If you feel overly sad or anxious, you may have postpartum depression or anxiety. Please reach out to your doctor or to us for help.
- If you are worried about your living or food situation, talk with us. We can connect you with community resources such as WIC and CC4C.

Next Well Check: 9 months of age

This is general guidance. Please speak with us directly about specific concerns for your child. Well checks are an important time to review growth, development, and what to expect over the next few months with your baby.