

# Health and Wellness: 6 Months

## Development

At this age, your baby may:

- roll over
- sit with support or lean forward on his or her hands in a sitting position
- put some weight on his or her legs when held up
- play with his or her feet
- laugh, squeal, blow bubbles, imitate sounds like a cough or a “raspberry” and try to make sounds
- show signs of anxiety around strangers or if a parent leaves
- be upset if a toy is taken away or lost.

## Feeding Tips

- Give your baby breast milk or formula until his or her first birthday.
- You may introduce solid baby foods: cereal, fruits, vegetables and meats. Avoid added sugar and salt.
- Avoid citrus fruits, egg whites, chocolate, honey and nut butters. Your baby may have a severe reaction to any of these foods.
- Give your baby only a few ounces of fruit juice each day (maximum 2 ounces).
- You may need to give your baby a fluoride supplement if you have well water or a water softener.

## Stools

- Your baby’s bowel movements may be less firm, occur less often, have a strong odor or become a different color if he or she is eating solid foods.

## Sleep

- Your baby may sleep at least 14 hours a day.
- Put your baby to bed while awake. Give your baby the same safe toy or blanket. This is called a “transition object.” Do not play with or have a lot of contact with your baby at nighttime.

### Your baby’s growth:

Weight:

\_\_\_\_\_ lbs. \_\_\_\_\_ oz. (\_\_\_\_\_ percent)

Length:

\_\_\_\_\_ in. (\_\_\_\_\_ percent)

Head circumference:

\_\_\_\_\_ cm / in.

- If you put your baby to sleep with a pacifier, take the pacifier out after your baby falls asleep.
- You should not take your baby out of the crib if he or she wakes up during the night. You can comfort your baby while he or she lies in the crib.

## Safety

- Make sure your baby always rides in a car seat that is secured in the back seat, facing the rear window.
- Keep your baby out of the sun. If your baby is outside, use sunscreen with a SPF of more than 15. Try to put your baby under shade or an umbrella and put a hat on his or her head.
- Do not use infant walkers. They can cause serious accidents and serve no useful purpose.
- Childproof your house once your baby begins to scoot and crawl. Put plugs in the outlets, cover any sharp furniture corners, take care of dangling cords (including window blinds), tablecloths and hot liquids, and put gates on all stairways.
- Do not let your baby get small objects such as toys, nuts, coins, etc. These items may cause choking.
- Never leave your baby alone, not even for a few seconds.
- Use a playpen or crib to keep your baby safe.

- Do not hold your child while you are drinking or cooking with hot liquids.
- Turn your hot water heater to less than 120 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Keep all medicines, cleaning supplies and poisons out of your baby's reach.
- Call the poison control center (1-800-222-1222) if your baby swallows poison.

## What To Know About Television

The first two years of life are critical during the growth and development of your child's brain. Your child needs positive contact with other children and adults.

Too much television can have a negative affect on your child's brain development. This is especially true when your child is learning to talk and play with others.

The American Academy of Pediatrics does not recommend television for children age 2 or younger.

## What Your Baby Needs

- Play games such as "peek-a-boo" and "so big" with your baby.
- Talk to your baby and respond to his or her sounds. This will help stimulate speech.
- Give your baby age-appropriate toys.
- Read to your baby every night.
- Your baby may have separation anxiety. his means he or she may get upset when a parent leaves. This is normal. Be sure you and your partner get out of the house occasionally while your baby stays home with a babysitter.
- Your baby does not understand the meaning of "no." You will have to remove him or her from unsafe situations.
- Your baby fusses or cries due to a need or frustration. He or she is not crying to upset you or to be naughty.

## Eye Exam

Your pediatrician or family practice provider will give your child an eye exam in the clinic.

## Dental Care

Make regular dental appointments for cleanings and checkups starting when your child's first tooth appears. (Your child may need fluoride tablets if you have well water.)

## Immunizations (Shots) Today\*

Your child may receive these shots at this time:

- DTaP, HepB, IPV (diphtheria, tetanus and acellular pertussis + hepatitis B + inactivated poliovirus vaccine) \***Note: The first three shots may be given as one shot (Pediarix™).**
- PCV13: pneumococcal 13-valent conjugate vaccine
- Hib (haemophilus influenzae type b conjugate vaccine)
- influenza.

Talk with your health care provider for information on giving acetaminophen (Tylenol®) after your child's immunizations.

## Your Baby's Next Well Checkup

- Your baby's next well checkup will be at 9 months.
- Your health care provider may draw blood to check hemoglobin and lead levels.