



9-month check up

FEEDINGS:

The best food for your baby continues to be breast milk and/or formula. It is all right to give other foods, not just formula and/or breast milk. Many breast-feeding mothers may want to wean by this age. Please do not start your baby on milk at this time. Whole milk or non-fat milk is not good food for babies under one year of age.

Formula should be iron-fortified. Babies not on iron-fortified formula should receive iron- containing vitamin drops, such as Poly-vi-sol with iron. If you are only breast-feeding your baby, then give your child a daily liquid multivitamin (over-the-counter) to provide the necessary vitamin D intake. Follow the directions on the bottle for the child's age and weight.

Solid foods are fun for children, but should be kept to 1/3 or so of baby's total diet. Fruits, vegetables and cereals are best. Do not give hard cheeses and refined foods until your baby is older. Do NOT put any salt or sugar on baby's foods. A baby cannot miss sugar and salt if they never have had them. Good foods to give your baby are: cottage cheese or yogurt in small amounts, mixed with fruits or vegetables.

Your baby should be moving from bottles to sippy cups at this time. Your baby will have fun learning how to drink from a cup, and may be messy at first. Your baby will learn to drink from a cup and will be ready to wean from the bottle at 12 months. NEVER put your baby to bed with a bottle of formula or fruit juice. Putting the baby to bed with a bottle can cause tooth decay. Feedings should be given at a regular schedule. If your baby is in the habit of falling asleep with a bottle, put water only in it. It is a good idea to start the habit of cleaning baby's teeth with a cloth or toothbrush after feedings. This will help prevent cavities and set the pattern for brushing their teeth.

Baby's appetite will change. Sometimes they seem to eat well and other times will eat very little. Don't worry, this is normal. When you have offered a proper, balanced and nutritious diet, your baby can regulate the amount they take in. Don't push foods on the baby, and don't offer sweets or treats between meals. Give fruits, vegetables, juices, crackers and healthy foods to snack on.

BABY'S DEVELOPMENT:

At this age, some babies will still be learning to crawl. Some babies are racing crawlers and climbers. Most babies by now will start to try stand-up holding onto furniture, and later will take a few steps. Remember that it will only take a few minutes for your baby to get around. Get down on your own hands and knees and see what trouble you can get into. Check in the cabinets and under sinks; check everywhere a child could go. Remember to keep stairways blocked. Never leave the baby where there is water. They can drown in a very small amount of water.

Make your baby laugh and learn. The games that fill your baby with happiness can also develop his/her knowledge and social skills. Peek-boo teaches depth, light, and darkness. It teaches your baby that objects can be out of sight but still there. Your baby

will learn timing, patience and other ideas. Your baby will start taking small trips away from you, across the room, and then return to recharge his/her batteries. Your baby will gradually experiment with independence. Other simple games that make children giggle are; lip popping, a whisper, squeals, kissing her/his tummy, bouncy and walking fingers. Playing with your baby helps them feel good about themselves.

Your baby is probably showing a hand preference, and probably enjoys eating with his hands. Words like "no," "bye-bye," and "mama" or "dada" are used appropriately.

REMINDERS:

Shoes are for protection and not support. Baby's feet support themselves just fine and, until baby is walking out of doors, he can go barefoot. When you do buy shoes, be sure they have a very flexible sole, are not too tight, and are inexpensive enough to buy another pair when he/she outgrows them, which will be soon!

If baby throws a tantrum, do not respond with anger. Babies test their world and their parents as part of the growing process. This is normal and to be expected. The best approach is to either ignore the misbehavior, or to give the child a few minutes of "quiet time" alone by himself, in a separate room or area with no toys or other people to play with. After a few minutes most children will be ready to listen to your few words of advice, and will read your tone and the content of your voice. After giving a hug, find a toy or somewhere you and your baby can play and have fun. HAVE FUN!

SAFETY:

Poison proof your home by checking each room. Keep the Arizona Poison Control phone number posted where you can find it quickly. Household products should not be placed under the sink or anywhere an infant can get at them. Put them on the upper shelves out of reach of the children. Check all the rooms in the house. In the bathroom check for: medication, mouthwashes, fingernail preparations, sprays, powders, etc. Check bedrooms for medications and perfumes. Check the laundry area for bleaches, soaps, bluing agents. Check the garage for insect spray, gasoline or car products, paints or turpentine. The general household products to check for are alcoholic beverages, ashtrays, plants, and paint chips.

IMMUNIZATIONS:

KEEP YOUR BABY HEALTHY. Ask about your baby's shot schedule at every doctor's visit. Always keep your baby's record up to date, and keep it in a safe place; but carry it to the doctor's office at each well child check-up.