



## **Important Points for the 9 Month Visit**

### **Nutrition:**

By nine months your child will begin to show an interest in feeding him or herself. You may progress to stage 3 foods, which offer a chunkier texture. Once he or she has mastered the stage 3 foods, you may start to offer other finger foods such as well cooked and cut up squash, peas, potatoes, and small pieces of wafer type crackers. **DO NOT GIVE YOUR CHILD THE FOLLOWING:** spoonfuls of peanut butter, nuts, whole grapes, popcorn, uncooked peas or celery, as they are a choking hazard. Give your child the opportunity to use his newly developed skill of picking up small things by offering small bits of soft table foods. Continue teaching your baby to drink from a cup so she is off any bottles by 1 year. Continue using breast milk or formula until 1 year of age. Slowly decrease the amount of formula or breast milk to about 16 ounces by 1 year.

### **Development:**

Sits well, crawls, creeps on hands, may walk while holding onto the furniture, picks up small objects using thumb and index finger, brings hand to mouth, feeds self, bangs objects together, becomes interested in the trajectory of falling objects, cause and effect, searches for hidden objects, responds to own name, participates in verbal requests such as "wave bye-bye" or "Where is mama or dada?", understands a few words such as "no" or "bye-bye", imitates vocalizations, babbles using several syllables, enjoys social games with familiar adults such as peek-a-boo and patty-cake, may react to unfamiliar adult with anxiety and fear.

### **Touchpoints:**

- Sleep: the 9 month old should sleep through the night, but may experience night awakenings for short periods of time. Should this happen, check your baby, but keep the visit brief, avoid stimulating your infant and leave the room quickly once you feel everything is OK. Do not give extra bottles, take the baby to bed with you or rock her back to sleep; this will only reinforce the night awakenings and it will quickly become a habit.
- Stranger anxiety is the hallmark of the 9 month old, as she continues to experience separation individuation with her caretakers. He may appear "cool" or even a little afraid of certain strangers—even family members he does not see very often. This is normal behavior and games such as peek-a-boo help teach and play out this anxiety about separations and leaving.

### **Safety:**

- Your baby is now mobile and childproofing is a priority. Get down on your hands and knees to see from her perspective. Place plastic plugs in electrical sockets. Install gates at the top and bottom of stairs. Place safety devices on windows. Never use a baby walker with wheels. Lower the crib mattress. Learn CPR. **POISON CONTROL # 1-800-222-1222**
- Anything that can fit in a used toilet paper roll can occlude your baby's airway.
- Continue to use a rear facing car seat and never place your baby in the front passenger seat. You will not turn your baby forward until 2 years or older, or have outgrown weight or height limits for seat.
- Do not leave your baby alone in a tub of water, or on high places such as a changing table, bed, sofa or in a car alone. Turn your water heater down to 120 degrees F.
- Always empty buckets, tubs or small pools immediately after use.
- Install smoke and carbon monoxide detectors and check that they work properly every month. Keep the baby's environment free of smoke: no smoking in the home or car.

### **What to expect during this visit:**

- If you are exclusively breastfeeding your baby we will check his hemoglobin level at the 9 month visit. We will also inquire about risks for lead exposure and tuberculosis and may administer a PPD. The 3<sup>rd</sup> and last Hepatitis B vaccine will be given.
- We will discuss your baby's growth and development and any other concerns that you may have. Please prepare and bring in questions for your next visit at 12 months.