

Mendon Pediatrics

6 Month Visit

Next Visit: 9 Months

Nutrition

- Continue to breast or formula feed (24-36oz), usually 4-6 times a day.
- Give your breastfed infant 400 I.U.'s of vitamin D daily (found in store as Polyvisol or Trivisol 1ml dropper).
- Work towards three meals per day.
- Finger food (food that can be gummed and swallowed, swallowed whole, or that will melt in a mouth) may be started at about 7-8 months. By one year most children should be on finger food.
- To avoid choking hazards, cut foods such as meat sticks, hot dogs, and grapes, into non-round small pieces. Do not give raw vegetables, raw apples, popcorn, nuts, hard candy or chips to children under 4-5 years old.
- Remember to avoid honey until after your child's first birthday.
- Recent studies suggest that if there is not someone within the immediate family with a food allergy (mom, dad or sibling), then it is ok to introduce all varieties of foods before their first birthday. This may actually decrease food allergies by 20%
- Juice is okay in moderation. Realize that although juice contains vitamins, too much (more than 4 oz per day) may cause loose stools and poor growth. It is better for your child to eat the fruit than drink the juice.
- Avoid the temptation to make your child finish every bit of food on the plate or every last drop of the bottle. Encouraging babies to eat after they are full may establish a habit of overeating.
- Offer a variety of foods to the older baby; encourage but don't force the baby to sample them.
- Establish certain eating places so your child doesn't get in the habit of eating and drinking all over the house. Most babies can sit up well in a highchair by six months. Use a restraining or safety belt always, and supervise meals for safety. Make a habit of eating together as a family when possible. Turn the TV off so that you can talk to each other.
- If your child is thirsty, encourage him/her to drink water.

Fluoride

- Ready-to-feed formulas do not contain fluoride. In areas with a fluoridated water supply, a concentrated or powdered formula mixed with tap water, rather than ready-to-feed, can be used to protect the infant's developing teeth against dental cavities. If your water does not contain fluoride, please let us know.

Healthy Habits

- The poison center phone number should be posted on your phone and wherever your child spends much time. Poison control can be reached at **1-800-222-1222**.
- Infant CPR courses are offered through The American Red Cross. To schedule an appointment, call 241-4434.
- Car seat should be in the back seat, rear-facing until one year old.
- Make sure your house is baby proofed with appropriate gates, outlet covers, safety guards and latches to prevent injury. Do not to leave small objects such as coins and toy pieces, sharp objects, hot or caustic liquids, poisons, balloons or plastic bags around.
- Place up high and out of reach, any medications or cleaning supplies.
- Make sure smoke detectors work and fire extinguishers are available.
- Keep environment smoke-free.

- Crib mattress should be lowered when your child sits alone and lowered completely when he/she pulls to a stand.
- Be aware of safety risks posed by pets and well-meaning older siblings.
- Keep children out of the sun at peak times (10am-3pm) and always protect whenever outside in the spring and summer with sunblock (SPF 15 or higher).
- Shoes are needed only to protect the feet from sharp objects and the cold. They should be flexible, inexpensive, and fit in both length and width. Avoid rigid shoes.
- Never leave a baby alone in a bath or near a pool of water, no matter how shallow it is. Infants can drown in just a few inches of water.

Sleep

- By now many children are able to sleep through the night without parental help.
- Putting babies down with a bottle at nap or bedtime allows milk, or other sugar containing liquids, to pool in their mouths as they go to sleep. This can cause tooth decay, contribute to ear infections and lead to poor sleep habits.
- Provide a consistent bedtime routine.

Developmental Milestones: Over the next couple of months your child will start to:

- Bear some weight on legs when held upright.
- Sit without support.
- Creep or crawl.
- Stand holding on to someone or something.
- Object if you try to take a toy away.
- Rake with fingers an object out of reach.
- Work to get a toy that's out of reach.
- Pass cube from hand to hand.
- Babble consonants such as ga-ga-ga, ba-ba-ba, ma-ma-ma, da-da-da.
- Feed self.
- Smile often when interacting with you.
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Appropriate toys and activities

- Baby books with board, cloth, or vinyl pages.
- Old magazines with bright pictures for you to show your baby.
- Unbreakable mirrors of various sizes.
- Large building blocks.
- "Busy boxes" that push, open, squeak, and move.
- Squeeze toys.
- Tapes, cds, music boxes and musical toys.

Suggested Reading

The First Three Years of Life, Burton White
The Magic Years, Selma Fraiberg
Caring For Your Baby and Young Child, American Academy of Pediatrics
Infants and Mothers, T. Berry Brazelton
Your Baby and Child, From Birth to Age Five, P. Leach
Solve Your Child's Sleep Problems, Richard Ferber

Guide to Your Child's Symptoms, American Academy of Pediatrics

Sleeping Through the Night, Jodi Mindell, Ph.D.

Developmental Evaluations

The Early Intervention system is available for all children under age 3 for evaluation and treatment of motor and speech delays at no cost to the patient. Evaluations can be scheduled through your county:

Ontario County 396-4439 Livingston County 243-7299 Monroe County 753-5437

Love, security and trusting your instincts are the most important aspects of parenting. Outside sources may enhance but not replace these.