

Mendon Pediatrics

9 Month Visit

Next Visit: 12 Months

Nutrition

- Breast feeding or formula should be continued until one year at which time you may switch to whole milk. At this stage, children need extra fat to ensure healthy nerve and brain development.
- Provide regular meals and snack times; toddlers do well with three meals and 2-3 healthy snacks daily.
- Respect your child's ability to know when he or she is hungry.
- Expect a drop in your child's appetite as they enter the toddler years. This is normal because rate of growth slows.
- Children should be moving from baby foods toward all table foods by one year. Avoid nuts, hard candies, popcorn, hard raw fruits and vegetables which can cause choking. 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%
- Encourage healthy eating habits and remember that our children learn by watching us.
- Juice is okay in moderation, try to limit to 4oz per day.

Healthy Habits

- Your child's carseat should remain rear-facing until he or she has reached both **20 pounds and a year of age**. At that time it may be turned to face forward. The safest place is the center of the rear seat.
- Make sure that the poison control number **1-800-222-1222** is clearly posted in your home and in any location where your child spends time.
- Infant CPR courses are offered through The American Red Cross (241-4434.)
- Make sure that your child's environment is baby/toddler friendly:
 - Electrical outlets; appliance cords and window-covering cords out of reach.
 - Poisonous plants, household cleaners, medications and other poisons are up high, out of reach.
 - Stairs and open windows should be guarded against falls.
 - Strap large objects such as bookcases and dressers to the wall so that they cannot be pulled over onto your child.
 - Hot water temperature should be below 120 degrees.
 - Sharp objects are out of reach.
 - Swimming pools/hot tubs, bathtubs, and open containers with water should be off limits.
 - Garage door openers should have safety devices, so that they cannot be closed onto a child.
 - Smoke detectors and fire extinguishers are working.
- Avoid small, round or hard foods that your child could choke on. Be familiar with first-aid steps for choking. Consider taking a pediatric CPR course.
- Avoid exposure to environmental tobacco smoke which can cause an increase incidence of lung infections, ear infections and asthma.
- Keep children out of the sun at peak times (10am-3pm) and always protect with sunblock (SPF of 15 or above).
- If a gun is kept in the home, make certain it is securely locked and stored separately from the ammunition. Terrible accidents can happen quickly. Every 2 hours in the US, someone's child is killed by a gun.

Sleep

- Establish a regular bedtime routine. By this age a child should be able to put him/herself to sleep. A traditional object such as a blanket or soft cuddly toy, may provide an easy transition back to sleep when the child reaches a period of light sleep.
- Most infants sleep through the night by this stage and are taking at least 1-2 naps during the day.
- Recognize that each child has different sleep requirements.

Shoes

- Shoes are needed only to protect the feet from sharp objects and the cold.
- Shoes should be flexible, with non-skid soles, inexpensive, and fit well in both length and width.
- Most infants have feet that turn in or out when they begin to walk and they may be bowlegged.

Behavior/Development

- Over the next few months you will witness your infant becoming more mobile and independent. Encourage this by providing a safe environment in which to explore and by introducing your child to new textures, scents and sounds.
- Encourage children to use their emerging language. Narrate your life, point out objects, talk and sing together.
- Read to your child daily!
- This is a good time to begin establishing consistent rules and limits. Infants should be noticed more for their appropriate behavior than for their undesirable behavior. Praise your child when he or she does something well. If your child's behavior is inappropriate, try redirecting his or her attention. Other effective disciplinary actions, when necessary, include a stern restatement of the forbidden act ("biting is not allowed"), or a brief period of non-interaction ("time-out"). It is more realistic to structure the home environment than to expect a toddler not to injure himself or break things.
- Cuddle! Let your child know that he or she is special.

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

- Work to get a toy out of reach.
- Look for dropped object.
- Pull up to standing position from sitting.
- Get into a sitting position from stomach.
- Stand holding on to someone or something.
- Say "mama" or "dada" nonspecific.
- Play peekaboo, patty-cake (clap hands), or wave bye-bye.
- Walk holding on to furniture (cruise).
- Understand "no" (but not always obey it).
- Pick up a tiny object neatly with tips of thumb and forefinger (pincer grasp).

Appropriate toys and activities

- Stacking toys in different sizes, shapes and colors.
- Cups, pails and other unbreakable containers.
- Bath toys that float, squirt or hold water.
- Large dolls and puppets.
- Balls of all sizes (but not small enough to fit in the mouth).
- Push-pull toys.
- Toy telephones.
- Paper tubes, empty boxes, old magazines, egg cartons, empty plastic soda/juice/ milk bottles (well-rinsed).
- Cardboard books with large pictures and different textures.

Suggested Reading

What to Expect the First Year What to Expect the Toddler Years, A.Eisenberg

Touchpoints: Your Child's Emotional and Behavioral Development, T.B. Brazelton

Solve Your Child's Sleep Problems, R.Ferber

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

Caring for Your Baby and Young Child: Birth to Age 5, American Academy of Pediatrics

Sleeping Through the Night, Jodi Mindell, Ph.D

Raising Your Spirited Child, Mary Sheedy Kurcinka

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

Remember that you are your child's first and most important teacher.

This stage will pass quickly; enjoy it!