

9 Month Check Up

Well Child Appointments can be made online at AustinRegionalClinic.com.



Your baby's length, weight, head size, along with health screens and immunizations performed will be in the *After Visit Summary (AVS)* that your baby's provider or nurse will give you at the end of the visit. You can also view this information on MyChartARC.com

NUTRITION



Your child's diet should be expanding at this age. This is a good time to teach your child to enjoy eating healthy food. The most important factor determining what your child eats is what you eat. You are the most important role model for your child. It is important that you evaluate your own diet. What food you eat and what food you serve will be critical in developing your child's eating habits.

Some parents tell us that their children don't like certain foods. At this age the most important factor in food acceptance is repeated exposure. Rejection of a new food is normal. It can take 10-15 exposures to new foods before your baby will consider trying it. Do not give up. Ignore the faces your baby makes when trying a new food, and do not cater to their likes and dislikes.

Children's eating habits from 4 to 24 months show disturbing trends as they transition from baby food to table food. Unfortunately, nearly half of 9-12 month old children consume desserts, sweets, or sweetened beverages every day. At nine months, there is a considerable drop in vegetable and fruit intake. Help your child by offering fruits and vegetables at every meal.

Eating habits formed during this critical phase set the stage for food choices into adulthood.

Liquid Intake

Continue to feed your baby breast milk or an iron-fortified formula until at least 12 months of age. Wait until 12 months of age to introduce cow's milk.

Breastfeeding

Breastfed infants usually nurse 3-5 times a day. In your baby's good night routine, try to substitute an activity such as a bedtime story rather than nursing to sleep. Now that your child is getting teeth, frequent nursing during the night can lead to cavities during the toddler and preschool years. Continue to breastfeed your baby until a year of age if possible.

Formula-feeding

The average amount of formula taken per day at 9 months is 24 ounces. By 12 months, 16 ounces a day is sufficient. Do not let your child go to sleep with a bottle, this can cause cavities. Instead read a story or look through a book with your baby at bedtime.

Water/Juices

Breast milk, formula, and water are the best drinks for your child. Drinking PLAIN water (not flavored) is a good habit to start at this age. Offer water in a cup between meals if your baby seems thirsty. Juices are not needed at this age, except they are occasionally used to treat constipation. If you give your baby juice, offer it in a cup, and only offer 4 ounces or less of 100% juice. Excessive juice intake can cause diarrhea, excess gas, tooth decay, and poor nutrition.

Cup Training

Work towards a goal of stopping the bottle at 12 months.

Solids

Provide structure and predictability for your child by providing a set meal and snack schedule. Your infant should have three well-balanced meals and 2-3 snacks per day by one year of age.

Meals

In addition to breastmilk or formula, your baby's daily diet should include foods in each of the following food groups daily: grains (unsweetened cereal, whole wheat breads, pasta), vegetables, fruits, proteins (meat, beans, eggs), and foods containing dairy (cheese and yogurt).



Austin Regional Clinic

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- Review your child's AVS (After Visit Summary)

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A way to ensure that you are providing a well-balanced meal is by utilizing the MyPlate visual aid.

There is a tremendous amount of normal variation among babies with respect to how much they will eat. The most important way to gauge how much your child should eat is by following her hunger and fullness cues. Never force your child to eat food she is refusing.

Grains/Cereals

Infant cereals are an important source of iron for your baby during this period of rapid growth and a changing diet, especially if your baby does not eat other iron containing foods well. When serving other grains (like rice or pasta), aim to make ½ the grains whole grains (such as brown rice or whole wheat pasta).

Two servings a day of an iron-fortified infant cereal provides excellent iron supplementation. A serving is considered 4 tablespoons of dry cereal.



Fruits and Vegetables

Make sure that your baby is given at least two to three servings each of both fruits and vegetables a day. For most babies a serving is about four tablespoons (¼ cup) of the jar baby food or of cooked vegetables and fruits. Although you may feed your baby mashed bananas or other soft fruits, most fruits and vegetables should be cooked until they are soft.

This is a good time to start the “Five a Day” rule. The “Five a Day” rule refers to a basic recommendation by nutrition experts that everyone should eat a total of at least five servings of fruits and vegetables a day. By using the MyPlate visual diagram and offering your child a plate ½ filled with fruits and vegetables and by including fruits and vegetables at all snacks, your child will be getting what they need.

Meat, Mashed Beans and Eggs (protein-rich foods)

Your baby should have one to two servings of protein-rich foods a day. A serving is generally around two ounces (1/4 cup or 4 tablespoons). Jar baby-food meats are fine, other forms of meat have to be minced into tiny pieces before being given to your baby. Eggs, smashed beans, yogurt, and cheese are also a good source of protein. Beans should be smashed to reduce choking risk.

Self-feeding and Snacks

Encourage your child to feed herself at snack time and as you are feeding meals. Allowing your child to use her hands and a spoon, though messy and time-consuming, is important to learn to self-regulate how much they eat.

Snacks should be thought of as “mini meals” so include nutritious foods like fruits and vegetables. Finger foods for babies include: small pieces of banana or other soft fruits, well cooked vegetables cut small, dry unsweetened cereals (like yellow-box Cheerios), small bits of chicken, well-cooked pasta, scrambled eggs, or grated cheese. Have scheduled times for snacks and avoid allowing your baby to graze all throughout the day. Grazing throughout the day may give your baby too many calories.

SLEEP

Most nine month olds sleep around 11-12 hours overnight and have two naps (morning and afternoon) of 1-2 hours each for a total of 13 to 14 hours of sleep in a 24 hour day. Even babies who were sleeping through the night may start to wake up at this age. This is normal and considered part of separation anxiety.

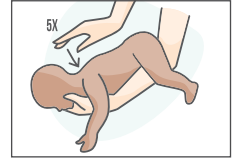
Tips to Prevent Sleep Problems:

- Have a soothing bedtime routine such as a bath, tooth brushing, bedtime story,

Choking in an Infant Under 12 months

What to Do If Your Child Is Choking

1. Check your infant’s mouth by opening the mouth with the thumb over the tongue and the fingers wrapped around the lower jaw. If the object is seen, it may be removed with a finger sweep. DO NOT sweep your finger in their mouth if you don’t see the object in their mouth.
2. If your infant is still choking, then place the infant’s face down over your arm with head lower than the trunk. The infant’s face should be in the support arm’s hand and infant’s legs should straddle the arm, one leg on each side of the elbow. With the heel of the hand, hit between your infant’s shoulder blades.
3. If not successful, turn the infant over and give five rapid chest compressions (two fingertips on chest just below nipple line) as in CPR. This is to push the object from the windpipe.
4. If still not breathing after five back blows and five chest compressions, check your infant’s mouth again by opening the mouth with the thumb over the tongue and the fingers wrapped around the lower jaw. If the object is seen, it may be removed with a finger sweep.
5. If no object is removed and infant is still choking, start the sequence again with the back blows.



and saying goodnight to family and favorite objects. Any late evening breast-feeding or bottle should happen before this bedtime routine.

- Your baby should be able to fall asleep on her own. Place her in her crib awake but drowsy.
- Make middle of the night contacts brief and boring. Your baby should not need middle of the night feedings at this age.

A recent study found that by age 1, 19% of children already have a television in their bedroom. AVOID THIS PRACTICE. Contrary to some beliefs, televisions in bedrooms are NOT a sleep aid. Televisions in bedrooms actually contribute to sleep troubles later on and encourage increased screen time and less interaction directly with people.

DENTAL TIPS



As soon as teeth begin to erupt, start brushing twice daily using a toothpaste with fluoride and a soft small toothbrush. Use a small smear of toothpaste to brush teeth of a child less than two years of age. Children are encouraged

to see a dentist within six months after the eruption of their 1st tooth.

Children with Medicaid insurance can find a dentist by searching www.tmhp.com or by calling 877-847-8377 (THSteps Hotline).

SAFETY

Thousands of children age 6 - 12 months have serious accidental injuries every year, most of which can be prevented. Most often injuries occur because parents are not aware of what their child can do. Babies are developing new skills every day. Constant supervision is needed. This is a good age to use a pack-n-play or playpen for short times when you cannot supervise your child. But, in general, limit time spent in items that restrict movement. Instead, now that your child is mobile, safety-proof your home with recommendations below.

Poisoning

Children are very curious, which can lead them to getting a hold of dangerous household detergents and other poisonous materials.



If your child should ingest a poison, call the Universal Poison Control Number, 1-800-222-1222. Post this number on your refrigerator and add it to the contact list on your cell phones. In the case of convulsions, cessation of breathing or unconsciousness, call 911.

The following information will be important:

- The name of the poison
- The amount and time it was taken
- Any changes to your baby since taking it
- The age and weight of your child

Things to Remember

- Read labels and warnings on all containers.
- Store potentially harmful products and medicines out of reach of children.
- Throw away unused portions and empty containers.
- Do not put potentially harmful substances in food or drink containers.
- Teach children to stay away from storage areas and medicine cabinets.
- Use child-protective safety latches and guards on doors, drawers, cabinets, etc.
- Avoid calling any medicines “candy.”

Home Safety

Keep all medicines and cleaning supplies well out of reach and equip all cabinets with safety latches. Everything your child finds will probably end up in her mouth, so be careful what is left lying around.

Falls

As your child’s strength and curiosity grows, it is important to place gates on stairways and other potentially dangerous areas. Also, remove or cushion any sharp edged furniture, just in case your child falls against it. Coffee tables and fireplaces seem to cause the most injuries. Make sure that your baby is strapped in properly at all times when in a stroller, high chair, or any other seats.

Car Safety

Most injuries and deaths caused by car crashes can be prevented by the use of car seats every time your child is in the car. Your child should remain in a rear-facing car seat until she is at least 2 years of age. A rear-facing car seat should never be placed in front of a passenger-side air bag. The safest place for all children is in the back seat.

For more information about car seats and for information about having your seat checked for proper installment call 1-800-252-8255 (safe riders program) or 1-866-SEAT-CHECK (www.seatcheck.org).

Do not leave your child alone in a car, even for a “few seconds.” Death and injuries from excessive heat or fumes can occur.

Burns

There are a number of ways that your child could be burned.

At this age children grab at everything. Never leave cups of hot drinks on tables or counter edges. Never carry hot liquids or food near your child or while holding your child. Do not let your child crawl or walk around stoves, wall or floor heaters or other hot appliances. Turn pot handles away from the stove’s edge so they are out of reach. A safe place for your child while you’re

cooking, eating, or unable to provide full attention is a playpen, pack-n-play, highchair, or crib.

Because children are just learning to grab at things, water can be a source of burns. Keep your home’s water heater at 120 degrees.

Children are at greatest risk in house fires. Test the batteries on your smoke alarm once a month to be sure that they work. Use long-lasting batteries or change the batteries at least twice a year on dates that you’ll remember, like the day that time changes for Daylight Saving and Standard Time.

Sun Exposure



Avoid the sun during the hours of 10am to 4pm. If outside, stay in the shade, use a floppy hat to protect your baby’s face, and use a sunscreen that is approved for children. Sun exposure during childhood can cause skin cancer and premature aging of the skin.

Walkers

The AAP does not recommend using walkers. Walkers allow children to get to places where they can pull heavy objects or hot foods onto themselves. Also, many children in baby walkers have had injuries from falling down stairs, walking out of doors, and running into furniture.

DEVELOPMENT

Gross Motor (Movement) Skills

Sitting



By nine months, most babies can get themselves into a sitting position without help, and can sit well balanced for extended periods. Your baby may still topple over as he reaches for items or gestures wildly. Don’t leave your baby unsupervised, even for a moment. Little arms can get caught in odd positions, preventing your baby from rolling normally.

Crawling

Most, but not all, babies can crawl by nine months. Some babies never learn to crawl, they scoot on their bottoms or slither on their stomachs. As long as your baby is learning to coordinate each side of his body and is using each arm and leg equally, there is no cause for concern. If you feel that your baby is not learning to move normally please discuss your concerns with your baby’s doctor.

Pulling to Stand and “Cruising”

After crawling is mastered your baby will next learn to pull himself up to a standing position using the bars of a crib, furniture, you, or whatever is handy. The next few weeks are then spent learning how to lower himself back down to sitting. Within a month after your baby masters pulling to stand, he will cruise about the room holding onto objects such as furniture. Consider the furnishings and potential dangers for your baby as he becomes mobile. Your baby needs constant supervision.

- Remove tall flimsy objects, dangling cords, and any furniture with sharp edges.
- Anchor (to the wall) television sets on stands.
- Tether tall bookshelves to the wall in the rooms where your baby plays.
- Cover plugs for electrical outlets.
- Do not buy your baby a walker. Walkers can slow development of your baby’s upper thighs and hips, and they can be dangerous.

Walking

The average baby walks without assistance at around 12 months of age, although it can take as long as 15-18 months to master this skill.

Hand and Finger Skills

By nine months, most babies have mastered at least a crude pincer grasp (picking up small objects with thumb and two opposing fingers). The next task for those little hands to learn is how to let go of the objects they grasp. At first, he will press the object against a flat surface and uncurl his fingers. Then by 10 or 11 months, most babies will learn to uncurl their fingers in mid-air and drop objects. Now the fun begins! He will practice this new skill constantly and those around him will be picking up toys, food, and whatever else he can get his hands on.

Language

Your baby probably does not speak true words yet, but he is learning about language. Early sound-making is a playful and enjoyable activity. Babies learn speech and language from those people who care for them and play with them. Talk directly to your baby.

Uninterrupted one-on-one conversations are important to a baby's language development. Babies learn the meaning of words by hearing them over and over again in different sentences with varying tones of voice, facial expressions and body language from the speaker.

At six months, most babies are vocalizing single-syllable sounds such as "maaaa" and "boooo." By nine months, vocal control improves and repetitive two syllable sounds, such as "baba" and "mama" are heard. This is babbling. You will hear long strings of varied syllables with variable inflections. As you listen you will hear questions, exclamations and even jokes.

Most babies say their first real word by 10 to 12 months of age, but don't be too obsessed by when their first word occurs. Expressive, varied sounds, especially if accompanied by gestures such as pointing, is good evidence that language is developing. Forming spoken words is not easy and occurs after much language development has occurred.

Ways to Help Your Baby's Language Development

- Talk directly to your baby about things that are physically present: "Look at brother playing with doggie!"
- If you talk about something not present make sure that it is something that will interest your baby: "Let's tell mommy about the fire truck we saw."
- Try to understand your baby's words or invented words.
- "Read" your child's picture books with big clear illustrations of babies and adults doing familiar things: "Look, the daddy is washing the car."
- Sing word-and-gesture songs and games that involve their bodies, such as "This little piggy went to market" and "Itsy bitsy spider."

Learning

Your nine-month-old is very curious and his new-found mobility will aid his exploration. He's a body in motion. He will check out every part of the house that he can - drawers, wastebaskets, cabinets, etc. Being active is an important part of your baby's development. Limit time spent in items that restrict movement (car seats, strollers, swings, seats, etc).

He now understands that objects continue to exist even when not in sight. He will look for hidden objects. He will enjoy every possible variation of "peek-a-boo."

It's true that TV and other mobile devices (collectively called "screen time") can sometimes seem like a busy parent's friend. But these are not the best choice for babies, even educational shows or Apps.

An infant's best teachers are his parents or guardians and his direct interactions with them. The American Academy of Pediatrics and doctors at Austin Regional Clinic recommend no screen time under 2 years of age.

Social and Emotional Development



Your baby will be open, affectionate, and outgoing with you, but anxious, clinging and easily frightened around unfamiliar people or objects. This is called separation anxiety or stranger anxiety, and is a normal emotional phase. Some people may say that your child is fearful because you are spoiling him. Don't believe it. Separation anxiety is a sign of a healthy relationship with you.

Separation anxiety usually peaks between 10 to 18 months, and then fades as your child approaches 2 years of age. This is usually both a tender and a painful phase for parents. You feel flattered to be so loved, but may also feel suffocated by his clinging or guilty when you must leave. Fortunately, this phase will not last forever

Suggestions that may help:

- Your baby is more susceptible to separation anxiety when he's in a new routine. The more consistent your patterns for when and how you say goodbye, the more easily he will be able to trust that he can predict your return.
- Don't make a fuss when you are leaving. Have the caretaker create a distraction, such as a toy. Then say good-bye and leave quickly. His tears will subside after you leave.
- When you drop your child off at the sitter's or a child-care center, spend just a few minutes playing with him in this new environment. When you leave, reassure him that you'll be back.



Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) Programs:

If you believe that your child is delayed or has a condition that could lead to delays, please ask your doctor to refer you.

You may also call **1-800-628-5115** or visit the ECI website at **dars.state.tx.us/ecis** for the ECI program closest to you.

READING SUGGESTIONS AND RESOURCES

Websites

healthychildren.org

American Academy of Pediatrics parenting website

healthychildren.org/growinghealthy

Dynamic interactive website to help encourage healthy habits for children 0 to five years of age.

vec.chop.edu

The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia Information on vaccines

cdc.gov/vaccines/parents/index.html

National Immunization Program

babybuffer.org

Parenting web site

For Parents with iPhones:

KidsDoc Symptom Checker



Allows parents to choose from a wide range of symptoms, then follow the symptom decision chart to determine the appropriate action to take, whether it be home care or a trip to the emergency room.

Books

Caring for Your Baby and Young Child, Revised Edition: Birth to Age 5

The American Academy of Pediatrics

Your Baby and Child: From Birth to Age 5

Penelope Leach

Healthy Sleep Habits, Happy Child

Marc Weissbluth

Solve your Child's Sleep Problems

Richard Ferber

Baby 411: Clear Answers and Smart

Advice for Your Baby's First Year

Ari Brown, MD and Denise Fields

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