

A Newsletter for Parents

6 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

Breast-feeding

As your baby's solid food intake increases, the number and duration of breast-feedings will decrease.

Formula-feeding

At this age, depending on whether solids have been started, most infants take 26 to 36 ounces of formula a day. By nine months the average amount of formula a day is 24 ounces.

Cup Training

Cup training should start by six months of age. Water and milk should be the primary drinks for your baby, so teach your baby to like plain water as part of cup training. Plan to discontinue bottle use by 12 months. Prolonged bottle use can cause cavities.

Water and Juices

Once your baby is taking a significant amount of solids the need for extra fluids increases. Offer water between meals when your baby seems thirsty. Juices are not recommended as they contain a large amount of sugar, although sometimes juices are used to help with constipation. If you give your baby juice, only offer your child 100% juice and limit the amount to 4 ounces a day. Excessive juice intake can cause gas, diarrhea, and tooth decay. Juice should be given in a cup, not a bottle.

Solid Foods

Continue to practice "responsive feeding" with your baby. Respond to your baby's cues of hunger and fullness. An infant shows hunger by moving his head forward to the spoon and swiping the food toward his mouth with his hands. Signs your baby may show that he is full include changes in posture, more hand activity, keeping his mouth closed, playing with utensils, and shaking his head "no."

Meals

Babies are ready for solid foods by six months of age, but how much they take varies. At six months of age some babies are already taking two meals a day, while others are barely starting to eat solids. Don't worry about what other babies are eating. Most parents introduce single-ingredient new foods, one at a time, and watch for adverse reactions over two-three days (rash, vomiting). Once your baby has learned to spoon-feed, a variety of cereals, fruits, vegetables, and meats may be added. Let your baby's appetite guide you. By nine months of age most babies are eating three meals a day.

Infants thrive with routines—including feeding routines. Try to have consistent times for meals. We encourage you to sit with your baby in his high chair with the family for their meals. Because you are such an important influence on your child's diet, look at your own plate and see what foods you are eating. Your baby is not too young to be affected by your eating habits. There is ample evidence that infants transition to foods that the family is already consuming.

This is the time to review the family's diet. Eliminate high calorie snacks and foods, as well as sugar containing beverages (soda, juice, sports drinks). Family habits like consuming desserts, sweets, and juice will roll right into the infant's diet.

Try to incorporate the plate model visual to make your baby's meals well balanced.



Online Access: Day or Night

- View your child's medical records.
- Book your child's next appointment.
- Review your child's AVS (After Visit Summary)

— **Enroll Today** —
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Types of Solids

Between 8-10 months of age you may begin with soft table foods and mashed foods. If mashed table food is given, it should be healthy, not sweets or fried foods. Remember the more times your child is offered foods, the more likely they are to develop a taste for it. It may take up to 15 times to introduce a food before your child accepts it. Use small pieces of soft foods.

While there is a tradition of delaying certain foods, like seafood, wheat, nut products, and eggs, due to concerns about food allergies, the American Academy of Pediatrics has found no scientific evidence that delaying these foods reduces allergies. However, raw honey is not recommended until 12 months of age.

Finger Foods

Small bite-sized foods can be started once your baby is able to sit without support and has a good pincer grasp, usually 8-10 months of age. Common finger foods are dry unsweetened cereals (like plain Cheerios), slices of cheese, soft small bites of canned or fresh fruits, cooked vegetables, and crackers. Just as with baby foods, it's important to feed your baby in a seat and supervise closely for any choking.

Iron Intake

If your breastfed infant does not take sufficient iron-fortified cereal or other iron-rich foods give a dropper a day of a multivitamin with iron, like Tri-vi-sol with Iron or Poly-vi-sol with Iron. Be sure to clean your baby's teeth after giving iron vitamins. Use a damp washcloth to prevent staining.

Since iron stores from pregnancy are depleted by six months of age and your baby is in a period of rapid growth, the risk of iron deficiency and anemia are high over the next 18 months. Giving two servings a day of infant cereal helps prevent iron deficiency anemia. At this age a serving is four tablespoons (¼ cup) of dry cereal. Meat, either baby food or minced, is another source of dietary iron. Discuss options with your child's doctor if you have questions. Formula-fed infants receive sufficient iron in formula and do not need iron supplementation.

Vitamin D

Infant formula is fortified with vitamin D but breastmilk is not. If your infant's main milk source is breastmilk, continue to give vitamin D liquid drops every day.

Dental Tips

As soon as teeth begin to appear, start using a soft-bristled, small toothbrush twice a day, preferably first thing in the morning and before bedtime (after the last feed). Use a small smear of fluoride containing toothpaste.

Cavities are now thought to be due to bacteria contracted from other people. You can lower your child's risk of cavities by not sharing your mouth bacteria with your child. Do not share drinks or forks and spoons with your baby and don't "clean" a dropped pacifier in your own mouth.

Children should see a dentist within six months after their first tooth erupts.

A Medicaid dental provider can be found by searching tmhp.com or by calling 877-847-8377 (THSteps Hotline).

SLEEP

By six months, most babies have settled into a schedule of 2-3 naps a day and sleep 10 to 11 hours overnight. The average amount of sleep in a 24 period is 14-15 hours.

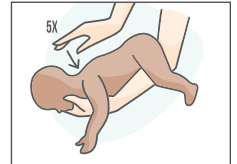


Choking in an Infant Under 12 months

Make sure food is always cut into small pieces and that small objects are kept out of your child's reach. Some of the more worrisome choking risks are coins, magnets, and button (circle) batteries. Don't feed your child hard pieces of food such as raw carrots. Remember no chips, popcorn, or nuts until your child can grind them with their back teeth—after four years old. Circular foods can block your baby's airway and cause choking. Cut grapes and hot dogs into small pieces.

What to Do If Your Child Is Choking

1. Check 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 perform a blind finger sweep on an infant less than 12 months of age.
2. If the 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. Five blows are delivered with the heel of the hand between the infant's shoulder blades.
3. If back blows were 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 expel the object from the windpipe.
4. If breathing is not reinitiated after five back blows and five chest compressions, check 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 object is not removed and infant is still choking, start the sequence again with the back blows.



Fluoride Information

Proper fluoride supplementation decreases cavities by 60%. The ideal concentration of fluoride in drinking water is 0.7 ppm (parts per million). For most patients in Austin, fluoride supplementation is accomplished by the added fluoride in our city water. However, if you have a reverse osmosis water system in your home or live in an outlying community, your child may need to have fluoride prescribed by your child's physician. If you chose to have your child drink bottled water, be sure to check the fluoride content by calling the company. Fluoride is not regulated in bottled drinking water. The following is a recommended schedule of fluoride supplementation recommended by the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry for children beginning at six months.

Fluoride Concentration in Community Drinking Water			
Age of Patient	<0.3 ppm*	0.3-0.6 ppm	>0.6 ppm
0 to 6 months	None	None	None
6 months to 3 years	0.25 mg/day	None	None
3 to 6 years	0.5 mg/day	0.25 mg/day	None
6 to 16 years	1.0 mg/day	0.5 mg/day	None

*1.0 parts per million (ppm) of fluoride - 1 mg/liter of fluoride

At night, most six month old babies can sleep without needing to feed. Babies do have times of lighter sleep during the night, during which they make sounds or cry out.

Many babies are able to return to deep sleep without assistance. Soon after six months most babies start to have separation anxiety when their primary caretaker is not in sight. This can trigger sleep problems.

Tips to Prevent Sleep Problems

- Have a soothing bedtime routine such as bath, bedtime story, and saying good night to family and favorite objects. A late evening breastfeeding or bottle should not be the last event in the bedtime routine.
- Your baby should be able to fall asleep on his own. Place him in his crib awake but drowsy.
- Make middle of the night contacts brief and boring. Your baby should not need a middle of the night feeding at this age.

SAFETY



Most injuries to babies can be prevented.

Injuries occur because parents and caretakers are not aware of what their child can do. Motor development is rapid in this age group. Constant supervision is needed. This is a good age to use a play-yard or a pack-n-play for times like cooking, times when you are in the garage, or times when it is difficult to watch your child or have them next to you.

Poisoning

Children are very curious, which can lead them to getting a hold of dangerous detergents, medications and other poisons. If your child should ingest a poison, call the Poison Center Network, 1-800-222-1222. Save this number in your phone. In case your child is seizing, has stopped breathing, or is limp: call 911.

The following information will be important:

1. The name of the poison
2. The amount ingested
3. The time it was ingested
4. Any symptoms
5. The age and weight of your child

Things to Remember

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

High Blood Lead

Children can be exposed to lead by living in older homes that have lead-based paints and/or by a family member’s occupation or hobby. This lead exposure can be harmful. The nurse will provide a questionnaire for you to read and help you decide whether or not your child is at risk for lead exposure.

If you answer yes to any questions on the questionnaire, a blood test for lead may be needed. Discuss any concerns with your child’s provider.

Home Safety

Now that your child is mobile, it is important to childproof his environment. Remove crib hanging toys at six months. If you have been using bumper pads, then it’s time to remove those as well. Crawling infants can use them to launch themselves out of their crib.

Falls

As your child’s strength and curiosity grows, it is important to place gates on the top and bottom of stairs. 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, car seat, or infant swing.

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. An infant should always sit in a rear-facing car seat until he is at least two 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 less than 13 years of age 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 (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 not reachable. A safe place for your child while you’re cooking, eating, or unable to provide full attention is a playpen, high chair or crib.
- Turn your water heater to 120 degrees.
- Children are at greatest risk in house fires. Make sure that your smoke alarms work. 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.

If your baby does get burned, put the area in cool (not ice cold) water immediately. Keep the burned area in cool water until he stops crying. Then cover the burn loosely with a bandage or clean cloth and call your baby’s doctor.

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

Walkers are not recommended. 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 that then falls onto them.

DEVELOPMENT

Gross Motor (Movement) Skills

Most babies can roll both front to back and back to front by six months of age. Many babies can sit by six months, but often it takes another month or two to be able to sit without support. Over the next two-three months your baby will probably start to crawl and start pulling herself to stand.

Give your child a chance to practice moving in different ways. Allow free time to move around the floor. The importance of unrestricted movement in safe, supervised areas on the floor cannot be stressed enough. Infants who spend too much time in confining equipment such as car seats, strollers, swings, bouncy seats, and exersaucers may experience delayed motor skill development.

Fine Motor (Finger & Hand) Skills

Most six month olds rake at small objects with their whole hand, but by 9 months most have an effective pincer grasp and can pick up small objects. Over the next few months your baby will learn how to transfer blocks or other small objects from one hand to another.

Give your baby lots of opportunities to use her hands. She is dependent on you to bring the world to her.

Language

At six months most babies are vocalizing with increasing frequency and variety. Babbling (repetitive consonant sounds such as ma-ma, da-da) is the next step in language development. By 9 months your baby should be babbling, at six months some are, some aren't. Lots of loving talk is the best way to help your baby's language development.

- Talk directly to your baby. Use many gestures and expressions. Overact.
- Use key labeling words when you talk. "Where are your socks? Let's find your socks." Rather than "Oh, where are they?"
- Talk to your baby about things that are physically present. "Look at the dog chasing the ball. Look at brother riding his trike."

Over the next few months your baby will begin to understand NO by the tone of your voice. Some families teach their baby basic sign language at this age. Signs are easier for baby to learn than true speech. Signing may reduce frustration, improve communication, and is not detrimental to speech development.

Social

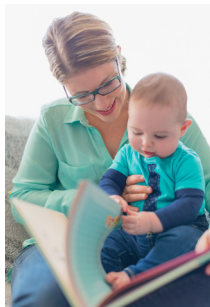
Your baby prefers people to inanimate objects. She will be entertained by your games with her. Play with your baby.

- Play peek-a-boo
- Wave "bye-bye"
- Bang objects together
- Play patty-cake.

By eight months, most babies become clearly attached to their main caretaker and fear separation. By the end of the year, this separation anxiety often increases and your baby may also begin to fear strangers. Separation anxiety can be stressful to that adult. Try to accept this phase and be proud of your importance to your baby. She is practicing loving for life. The more she can love now and feel love back, the more secure and loving she will be the rest of her life.

Read to Your Child

Reading aloud to your child is the best way to help your child love books and learning. Babies love to bring everything to their mouth, and books are no exception. But in the coming months as you talk about the pages with your baby, she'll come to love them for more than just the feel of cardboard in her mouth.



Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) Programs

The State of Texas has a network of local community programs (Early Childhood Intervention or ECI) that provide services to Texas families and their children, birth to age three, with developmental delays.

The cost of services provided are based on family income. Children are eligible for ECI services if they are under age three and have developmental delays or conditions (such as Down's, prematurity, vision, or hearing impairments) that have a high possibility of resulting in a developmental delay. Anyone may refer a child for ECI services.

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 & 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

seatcheck.org

Information about car seats

babybuffer.org

Parenting web site

For Parents with iPhones:



KidsDoc Symptom Checker - iPhone app called KidsDoc

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

Baby 411: Clear Answers and Smart Advice for Your Baby's First Year
Ari Brown, MD and Denise Fields

Your Baby & Child: From Birth to Age 5
Penelope Leach

Infants and Mothers: Differences in Development
Terry Brazelton

24-Hr Appointment Scheduling
visit MyChartARC.com or ARCAppointments.com

Same-Day & After Hours Care
call your ARC clinic and press "1"

24-Hr Phone Nurse
call your ARC clinic and press "4"

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