

Caring for your baby: 9 months

Feeding your baby

- Breast milk is the healthiest food for your baby. Breastfeed for as long as possible.
- After 12 months, you and your baby can decide the best time to wean. Gradual weaning is best.
- If you don't breastfeed or stop breastfeeding, use iron-fortified formula until your baby is 12 months old. Limit to 24 ounces to increase interest in solid food.
- Your baby can have many solid foods at this age. Healthy choices are fruits, veggies, cereals, meats, dairy, eggs, and fish. All solid foods, including nut products, need to be pureed to prevent choking.
- Babies at this age can pick up finger foods themselves, so it is very important to keep hard foods like raw carrots, whole nuts, hard candies, whole hot dogs, popcorn, gum, grapes, raisins, or seeds away from your baby.
- Introducing certain foods early, such as peanut products, can help prevent food allergies. This is especially true if your baby has eczema.
- Feed 3 to 4 meals per day plus snacks. Offer new foods every 5 to 7 days.
- When your baby is 12 months old, you can give pasteurized whole cow's milk or fortified soy milk.
- At 12 months, encourage your baby to use a cup instead of the bottle.
- Make sure your baby is getting 400 IU of vitamin D every day. Choose vitamins that don't have sugar.
- Do not give your baby honey during their first year.

Practicing healthy habits

- Don't let anyone smoke in your home or car. Smoking around your child increases their risk of ear infections, asthma, and pneumonia.
- Always wash your hands before feeding and after changing diapers.
- Don't put your baby to bed with a bottle. It can cause tooth decay.
- Make sure the doctor checks your baby's mouth at each visit. Ask if they need fluoride.

- Clean your baby's teeth with a damp washcloth or soft toothbrush after meals and at bedtime. If your drinking water is not fluoridated, your doctor may recommend fluoride drops to prevent tooth decay.
- Protect your baby's skin from sun exposure with protective clothing and sunscreen (SPF 15 or higher).

Keeping your child safe

- Keep your baby in a rear-facing car seat as long as possible. It's safest for your baby. For information on choosing the safest seat for your child, call toll-free at **1-800-282-5587** or visit **www.800BUCKLUP.org**.
- Child-proof your home (see 6-month checkup).
- Put safety gates at top and bottom of stairs.
- Do not use infant walkers. They are dangerous and may cause injuries to your child.
- If you think your child has been poisoned, call Poison Control toll-free at **1-800-222-1222** (voice and TDD). Keep the number near your phone.
- Watch your baby at all times around water (pool, hot tub, bucket, bathtub). Make sure they are wearing a life jacket when near water.
- Learn first aid for choking (see other side). Hang drapery and electrical cords out of reach.

Other parenting tips

- Talk and read stories to your baby every day.
- Remember that fear of strangers is normal at this age.
- Choose shoes that are flexible, inexpensive, and fit well. Shoes protect your baby's feet from injury and cold.
- When discipline is needed, say "no," then physically move your baby away from a dangerous situation. Do not yell or spank.

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What to do if your baby is choking

- If your baby is COUGHING, but is also BREATHING and CRYING: Call your health care provider. After hours, call the Consulting Nurse Service toll-free at **1-800-297-6877**.
- If your baby is CHOKING and CANNOT BREATHE: Call 911, then do the following:
 - Step #1: Put baby face down on your arm, supporting the head, with head lower than body.



Step #2: Give up to 5 back blows with heel of hand between baby's shoulder blades.

Step #3: Put baby face up on your forearm with head lower than body.



Step #4: Give up to 5 chest thrusts near center of breastbone.

Step #5: Lift jaw and tongue, look in mouth. If foreign body is seen, sweep it out with finger.

Step #6: If baby is not breathing, tilt head back and give 2 breaths.

Taking a CPR training class is a good way to prepare for emergency situations like choking.

WEBSITES

- Kaiser Permanente: kp.org/wa
- American Academy of Pediatrics: aap.org

SUGGESTED READING

- *Your Child's Health*, Schmitt
- *Caring for Your Baby and Young Child: Birth to Age 5*, American Academy of Pediatrics
- *Baby Proofing Basics*, Lansky
- *Baby's First Year*, Murphy, et al.
- *How Weaning Happens*, Bengson
- *Baby & Toddler Food*, Konemann

Next well-child visit at 12 months old