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Well Child TIPS FOR TAKING CARE OF YOUR 9-MONTH-OLD

CHILDREN ARE CONSTANTLY CHANGING. And while you as parents can't anticipate every change, these Well Child Tips can prepare you for what lies ahead and help you raise a healthy and safe child.

SAFETY

- Keep windows closed and locked to keep your baby from falling out of them. Put window guards on all windows or open windows from the top; screens cannot keep your child from falling out. Move furniture away from windows so your baby cannot climb up to them. Keep doors to balconies and decks locked.
- Many things in your home are dangerous once your baby can crawl. Look for wobbly furniture, sharp corners, loose knobs on cabinets and drawers and tablecloths that your baby can pull down.
- Take the bumper pads and stuffed toys out of your baby's crib. He can use them to climb out of bed.
- Always unplug electrical appliances such as hair dryers, curling irons and radios after you use them. Then put them away. Remember never to use them near water.
- Space heaters and kerosene heaters can cause fires. If you must use a space heater, make sure there are no bedspreads, draperies or other flammable objects nearby and do not use the heater while you are sleeping. Kerosene and other fuel-burning heaters and appliances can also cause carbon monoxide poisoning if there is not proper ventilation.
- Put a smoke alarm and a carbon monoxide detector in the hallway outside your bedroom and on every level of your home. Check the batteries monthly and change them twice a year or as often as the instruction manuals indicate. For more information on fire safety, please visit our Web site at www.choa.org. Or stop by the nearest Children's Healthcare of Atlanta Immediate Care center.
- If you have any questions about immunizations, be sure to discuss them with your child's healthcare provider. Following a regular immunization schedule is very important for your child's health.

NUTRITION

- You can begin giving your 9-month-old baby some foods that you eat. To help prevent choking, give him small pieces of soft food that he can easily swallow and always stay with him while he is eating. Good first foods are potatoes, green peas, soft cheese and Cheerios. Avoid foods that are easy to choke on, especially small, round foods such as grapes, carrots, popcorn and hot dogs.
- Your baby is less likely to choke if he sits in a secure place such as a highchair when eating. Be sure to buckle him in using the waist and crotch straps.
- Along with breast milk or formula, babies need a variety of foods such as fruits, vegetables, cereal and protein. Your baby does not need sweet or salty snacks.
- Wait until your baby is 1 year old to give him peanut butter and citrus fruits (like oranges) or strawberries to reduce the risk of an allergic reaction to these foods.



- Continue to offer small amounts of breast milk, formula or water in a cup. Your baby will be getting better and better with a cup. You may offer small amounts of apple juice or grape juice, half diluted with water at one snack daily.
- Your baby wants to have more control over his eating now. Offer him finger foods he can manage by himself.

DEVELOPMENT

- Around 8, 9 or 10 months of age, your baby will start to crawl or “scoot.” Some babies never crawl before they walk. Your baby may “cruise” soon, which means he will walk holding on to furniture.
- Help your baby get in shape for walking. Hold his hands and support him while he takes steps. Cheer for him as he learns to walk.
- Soon, your baby may be able to roll a ball and drink from a “sippy” cup by himself.

PARENTING

- Wash your baby’s teeth and gums every day. You can use a wet wash cloth, wet gauze or a baby toothbrush. Do not use toothpaste until he can spit it out.
- Your baby may start to be afraid of other people or cry when you leave him with someone else. This is normal. If he is very unhappy and never stops crying when you leave him with the same person, such as a baby sitter, make sure there is nothing wrong.
- At 9 months of age, your baby may want to do more things for himself. Changing diapers can become harder and he may want to feed himself. Be patient with your baby and find new ways to do things. Keep toys beside the changing area or try changing his diaper while he stands up. Let him feed himself, even though he makes a mess.
- Crawling babies like to stay busy. Fill a kitchen drawer or cabinet with unbreakable things your baby can pull out and play with while you cook dinner.
- If you haven’t learned CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) and how to rescue a choking infant or child, do so now. Contact the American Red Cross, the American Heart Association or Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta for more information on classes.

NEXT VISIT _____

Until your next appointment, you may call your child’s healthcare provider if you have any questions about keeping your baby safe and healthy. If your child’s healthcare provider is unavailable, call the Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta pediatric advice line at 404.250.kids or check the Children’s Web site at www.choa.org for more information.

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS _____

NOTE: These tips are just a guide and do not give you all the information you need to raise a healthy and safe child. Remember that children develop and grow at different rates and you know your child best. If you have any questions or concerns, be sure to ask your child’s healthcare provider.