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Infant, Child and Adolescent Medicine

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6 MONTHS

Immunizations: #3 Rotavirus, Prevnar (Pneumococcus), Pentacel (Diphtheria, Tetanus, & Pertussis, Haemophilus influenza B, Polio) + Seasonal Influenza (during flu season)

Side effects may include - fussy, sleepy, fever (<102) x 2 days, injection site reaction of redness, bump and tenderness. Ok to give Tylenol and now also Ibuprofen for discomfort or fever.

- If you are traveling internationally, please talk with us about other recommendations.

Development:

Social/Emotional: Knows familiar people and may start having stranger danger. Laughs. Enjoys looking in a mirror.

Communication: Makes squealing noises. Will take turns making sounds with you. Recognizes and responds to their name.

Motor: Rolls from tummy to back. Pushes up with straight arms when on tummy. Learning to sit; they will lean on hands to support when sitting. Supports weight on both legs when standing, and might bounce.

Problem-solving: Puts things in mouth to explore. Reaches to grab toy and transfers objects from hand to hand.

Talk, sing and read to your baby. Engage in conversation with your baby. Place your baby so they can sit up and look around. Put colorful toys close for them to reach and roll to. Play games like peekaboo, patty-cake, and so big. Let them play with food.

Feeding:

- Most babies have doubled their birth weight now. Their growth will slow down and the number of milk feeds may start to decrease over the next 3 months.
- Breast milk or formula is still the major source of food for your baby, but solid foods should be started by 6 months if they haven't been yet.
- Ok to give water now. Introduce this by allowing them to self-serve with a sippy cup or straw cup. They won't take more than their kidneys can handle at this age.
- **Introduction of Solid Foods** (Mostly repeated from 4 mo handout)
 - Cereal (e.g. rice, oat) can be a 1st starter food. It comes in a box in the baby food section, and you mix it with breast milk or formula. These are fortified with iron, hypoallergenic, and easy to make just a few spoonfuls at the desired consistency making it an easy starter. Give it with a spoon, not mixed in a bottle. Start with just a little at the tip of a spoon and let them suck it off. Babies will tell you how much they want to take, often getting tired before actually feeling full from the new foods.
 - There is no best starter food, it is really up to you.



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- It is no longer recommended to wait days in between starting new foods. Continue to keep adding more items to their diet.
- Start with once daily, and increase to 3 meals daily (like we do) by around 9 months of age. The time-of-day foods are given is completely up to you - solids tend to make them full longer which can be a benefit at night. Others prefer to be able to monitor kids after eating during the day.
- Foods have been traditionally introduced as purees first and then table foods being appropriate by 9 months when babies have pincer grasp, however baby-led weaning can be done as well which is a method that allows more for babies to lead the way in self feeding with foods in their more natural form.
- It is recommended to introduce known allergen foods like tree nuts (ie peanut, almond butters), eggs, fish, shellfish (shrimp, crab, lobster) in small amounts repeatedly early on. Studies show this is reducing the risk of developing allergies to these foods.
- Meats and dairy (unless a baby has a history of milk protein allergy, talk with us prior) can be introduced as well.
- Best method to avoid picky eating habits in toddler age is to introduce lots of different colors, tastes, and textures to infants with their solid food early on.
- No honey until >12 months old.
- Some babies take to solids really quickly, others need a lot of practice with it. Remember that solid foods are all for fun <12 months. Frequency of milk feeds does not typically decrease until after 6 months.
- Sometimes when babies start solid foods, they can have GI upset including abdominal pain, gas, stool changes either constipation or diarrhea.

Common Concerns:

Sleeping:

- They can learn to sleep through the night, and take their feeds all during the day. Sleep training is appropriate now if you would like to do so. Babies need to learn to fall asleep on their own. Put them down in their crib sleepy, but not fully asleep so they can learn to self sooth. Average sleep time is 11 hrs at night (many taking it straight through) and 2-3 naps during the day.

Teething:

- Your baby may start to get teeth, but may not until 12 mo old. For pain, give cold toys to chew on and Tylenol or ibuprofen can be given. It is not recommended to use amber necklaces because they are a choking hazard and teething tablets or gels can be harmful for your baby. Wipe teeth with soft cloth or finger brusher.
- Fluoride is needed to help protect teeth. Fluoride topical application will be offered in the office once your baby has teeth. Fluoride is also added to a lot of tap water, if it is not in your water or you prefer to drink bottled water, ask us about fluoride supplements.

Safety:

- Cars - Reminder that infants all need to be rear facing in a car seat whenever the car is moving. Do not leave a baby unattended in the car. They can be silent when sleeping,



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have a method to remind yourself they are with you when exiting the car (e.g., leave your shoe or another article of clothing in the back seat which you will remember to get).

- **Stairs-** Baby gates need to be on all stairs, top and bottom. No walkers. Best to get a stand-alone jumper if that is desired, but keep in mind this is good for baby entertainment, not for their overall development. It is better to have them on the ground to allow them to move.
- **Poisons-** Chemical cleaners, soaps and medications all need to be placed in a high cabinet locked up. Put them away right after they are used. Call poison control if there is concern about an exposure at 800-222-1222.
- **Burns-** Do not leave hot irons or hair care products plugged in. Put your baby down when handling hot liquids. Turn pot handles inward on the stove. Do not leave hot liquids in a cup unattended (e.g. your morning coffee). Block off fireplaces, heating grates, portable heaters, and cover all electrical outlets.
- **Furniture-** Make sure all furniture is stable, cabinets and dressers for example need to be bolted to the wall.

Suggested Reading for Parents:

Raising a Healthy, Happy Eater, Nimali Fernando, M.D.

What to Feed Your Baby. Tanya Altmann, M.D.

First Bites, Dana White

What to Feed Your Baby and Toddler, Nicole Avena, PhD

Child of Mine, Ellyn Satter

<https://solidstarts.com>. “Baby-led weaning on a Budget” free guide, others are for pay.

<https://www.101beforeone.com>

<http://kidseatincolor.com>

It's Never Too Late to Sleep Train, Craig Canapari, M.D.

Healthy Sleep Habits, Happy Child, Marc Weissbluth, M.D.

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