

# 6 MONTH VISIT

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ AGE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

WEIGHT \_\_\_\_\_ PERCENTILE \_\_\_\_\_ HEIGHT \_\_\_\_\_ PERCENTILE \_\_\_\_\_

PHYSICIAN or NURSE PRACTITIONER: \_\_\_\_\_

## *What is normal development at 6 months? By this time most babies should:*

- \*imitate speech sounds, and begin to speak single (hard) consonants such as "dada."
- \*roll front to back, and back to front.
- \*sit with support.
- \*can bear weight on legs when held in a standing position.
- \*transfer objects from one hand to the other.
- \*be starting to try to feed themselves.
- \*actively work towards getting toys or objects.
- \*turn to your voice.

## *Looking ahead to the 9 month visit, most babies should:*

- \*respond to their own name.
- \*sit independently (without anything supporting them).
- \*throw objects.
- \*feed themselves finger foods.
- \*start having stranger anxiety (nervous when "new" people are near).
- \*have a pincer grasp, which is using the thumb and index finger to pick up small objects.
- \*cruise (cruising is the term used to describe when a baby stands and slowly walks or moves along while holding on to something like a couch for support).

## Anticipatory Guidance

### *Diet/Feeding:*

- \*Expect your baby's appetite to diminish a little in the next 6 months as growth slows.
- \*Avoid foods that are choking hazards, such as nuts, grapes, popcorn, carrot sticks, hot dogs, sausages, raisins, corn, pieces of meat, and hard candy.
- \*No cow's milk until your baby is 1 year old - continue to breast feed or use iron-fortified formula.
- \*Iron rich foods are especially important if your baby is breastfed.
- \*Continue to introduce new foods, starting with fruit, then vegetables, then meat.
- \*Your baby will begin to show preferences for some foods, and dislike others as new items are introduced.
- \*Now is the time to introduce a cup - it is important to eliminate bottles by your baby's first birthday.
- \*Continue to give the breast feeding infant supplemental Vitamin D (Vidaylin) if recommended by your doctor or nurse practitioner.

### *Elimination:*

- \*Your baby will have his own frequency of bowel movements.
- \*Most babies strain, grunt, and fuss when they have bowel movements. This does not mean they are constipated. Constipation is hard poop, not necessarily the number of bowel movements in a day.

### *Sleep:*

- \*Maintain your baby's bedtime routine - encourage him to console himself by putting him to sleep awake.
- \*Your baby may begin decreasing the length and frequency of naps. This is normal.
- \*Some 6 month old babies begin night awakenings for short periods of time. Should this happen, check your baby, but keep the visit brief, avoid stimulating your baby, and leave the room quickly once

you feel everything is OK.

### **Dental:**

- \*Consider fluoride - discuss this with your doctor or nurse practitioner.
- \*Begin letting your baby imitate you with a tooth brush.
- \*If your baby has teeth, brush them regularly, but don't use adult toothpaste.
- \*For teething, cool (not frozen) teething toys, Tylenol, or topical anesthetics can be helpful for the pain.

### **Parenting:**

- \*Continue to establish routines. Babies tend to be more relaxed when meal times and sleeping times are consistent. Bedtime is especially important, which includes a consistent routine getting ready for bed, and putting your baby to bed awake. By 6 months, many babies will sleep through the night.
- \*Begin playing social games such as pat-a-cake and peek-a-boo.
- \*Reading to your baby is important, even at this early age.
- \*Talk with your baby and describe things you are doing. This may help stimulate language development.
- \*Learn about play groups and parent support groups. Be sure to spend time taking care of yourself.

### **Safety:**

- \*Be careful around water. NEVER leave your baby unattended in the bath tub.
- \*Hot bath water is a frequent cause of burns; keep your water heater set below 120 degrees.
- \*Limit direct sunlight and use sunscreen outdoors - babies have sensitive skin and can quickly get very painful sunburns.
- \*Keep small objects (choking hazards) and sharp objects out of reach.
- \*Children should not be left alone in a car.
- \*Keep poisons, chemicals, and cleaning agents locked up and out of reach.
- \*California Poison Control Center: 1(800)876-4766.
- \*As your baby becomes mobile, it is more important than ever to safety-proof your house, including gates at the top and bottom of stairs, and locking devices on drawers and cabinets.
- \*Use the playpen as "an island of safety."
- \*If you have a pet, keep his or her food and dishes out of your baby's reach. Also, never allow your child to approach a dog while the dog is eating.
- \*Continue to use an infant car seat that is properly secured at all times.
- \*Avoid using baby walkers. They can cause serious injuries and even death, and there is no clear benefit from their use.
- \*Get down on the floor and check for safety hazards at your baby's eye level.
- \*Lower the crib mattress.
- \*Learn first aid and infant CPR.
- \*Avoid dangling electrical and drapery cords.

### **When to Call the Doctor:**

- \*Your baby is not gaining weight or becomes uninterested in eating.
- \*Your baby seems very stiff or floppy.
- \*Your baby has more than a mild illness.

### **Next Well Baby Visit:**

- \*When your baby is **9 months** old.



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