

# your child @<sup>TM</sup>

## 6 to 9 months

highlights of what's happening at this stage of your child's development ...

By now, your child might be rolling, reaching, and laughing his way through the day.

### Your child's health



#### The Well Visit

Your baby should visit the doctor at 6 months. Your doctor will give vaccinations that will keep your child healthy and strong.

Let your doctor know if your baby:

- Seems very stiff or floppy, or cannot sit with help.
- Does not laugh or squeal.
- Does not actively reach for objects.
- Does not roll over from front to back.

Schedule your next visit. Your baby will need to come back at 9 or 12 months.

#### Sleep

At this age, your baby still needs 2 or 3 naps a day. Put your baby to sleep at night between 6 and 8 pm. She may get up for a night feeding, especially if she's breast-fed.

To help your baby sleep, create a regular bedtime routine. Give her a bath, sing a song, read a book, or give her a hug and say good night.

#### Nutrition

Your baby should drink up to 24 ounces of breast milk or formula per day. You may have started to give your baby cereals over the past few months. Once your baby gets used to eating baby cereal, move on to smooth, single-ingredient foods.

- Start with fruits and vegetables. Talk to your doctor about starting meats and other foods.
- Introduce 1 type of food at a time.
- Serve it for at least 2 to 3 days to make sure your child is not allergic. Call your doctor if you think your child has a reaction.

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Sources: *Your Baby's First Year* and *Caring for Your Baby and Young Child*, American Academy of Pediatrics, Steven P. Shelov, MD, FAAP, editor in chief; *Understanding Children*, Civitas and Richard Saul Wurman; *KidBasics*, Civitas; *Healthy Sleep, Happy Child*, Marc Weissbluth, MD.

Civitas thanks **Parents as Teachers**, an international early childhood parent education and family support program, for their ongoing support.

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### Nurturing your child

**Behavior** At this age, babies do not understand discipline. Instead, as they explore, focus on safety. You can:

- Distract or move your baby from unsafe objects or activities.
- Childproof your home. Keep all dangerous objects out of reach of your child.
- Never shake, spank, or hit your child.

**Play** Learn about your child's interests by watching and playing with him. You can:

- Let him play on his tummy. This will strengthen his neck, back, and arms.
- Give your child musical instruments or objects to play with. A pot and a spoon make a great drum.
- Move your play time outside when you can. You can go for walks, look for birds or airplanes, or just sit with your child on a blanket on the grass.

**Language** You are your child's first teacher. To encourage her language skills you can:

- Read and tell stories together every day.
- Hold and hug your baby when you talk and read with her.
- Ask your child a question, and wait for her to answer with her babble or a smile.
- Provide books that are made of cardboard or cloth to make page turning (and chewing) easier.

### Safety Tip

By law, your baby must ride in a secure, rear-facing car seat. He must ride in the back seat of your car.

### Your child's safety

- Around the House**
- Cover electrical outlets. Tie up cords hanging from blinds.
  - Put safety latches on cabinets, drawers, and toilets.
  - Keep her away from toys or items with small parts. These can cause choking.
  - Keep cleaning supplies, medicines, and sharp objects out of reach.
  - Call poison control right away if you think your child has swallowed poison: 1-800-222-1222.

*Born Learning*™ is a public engagement campaign helping parents, caregivers and communities create early learning opportunities for young children. Designed to support you in your critical role as a child's first teacher, *Born Learning* educational materials are made available through the efforts of United Way, United Way Success By 6 and Civitas. For more information, visit us online at [www.bornlearning.org](http://www.bornlearning.org).

