



kids 
pediatrics
9-Month Handout

9-MONTH DEVELOPMENT QUESTIONS

1. Can your baby pull herself to a standing position?
2. Can your baby crawl?
3. Can your baby sit upright on his own, with no extra support?
4. Does your baby make babbling noises (ma-ma, da-da)?
5. Does your baby use her thumb and fingers to grasp small objects?
6. Will your baby feed himself using his fingers?
7. Can your baby play peek-a-boo or pat-a-cake?
8. Does your baby respond to her name?

LEAD EXPOSURE QUESTIONS

1. Does your child live in or regularly visit a house built before 1960 with peeling or chipping paint?
2. Does your child live in or regularly visit a house built before 1960 with recent or ongoing remodeling?
3. Does your child have a brother, sister, housemate, or playmate who has had lead poisoning?
4. Does your child live with an adult whose job or hobby involves exposure to lead (such as plumbing, furniture refinishing, pottery, or auto repair)?

TUBERCULOSIS QUESTIONS

1. Has your child been exposed to a person with known or suspected tuberculosis?
2. Has your child lived in a high-risk area such as Asia, Africa, the Middle East, or Latin America?
3. Does your child have contact with a person who regularly visits a high-TB-risk country?
4. Does your child have contact with institutionalized persons, HIV-infected people, or drug users?

FEEDING

Your baby should continue to receive breastmilk or formula until 12 months. If he's drinking formula, 16-32 oz is a typical volume at this age.

Encourage your baby to start experimenting with drinking water from a sippy cup. Between now and 12 months, your baby will shift from primarily getting nutrition from fluid to getting more nutrition from solid food.

Speaking of solid food, at this age your baby can eat almost whatever you are eating.

Continue avoiding honey until 12 months and watch carefully for choking hazards. All babies are different as far as what textures they can manage, but it's okay to offer different soft foods to see how they do (always stay close by). If you haven't already, it's fine to introduce eggs as well as peanut butter and dairy products such as yogurt and cheese. Nuts are considered a choking hazard, so avoid those.

Your baby doesn't have any seasoning/spice restrictions. She can start getting used to food the way you flavor it! Just be careful with very salty foods such as processed foods, or foods high in added sugar. Remember, your baby is developing her taste for foods, and if she gets used to healthy foods now, it will be easier for her to continue eating healthfully as an older child.

Wait until 12 months before switching to whole milk.

PREVENTING TOOTH DECAY

Your baby is at risk for tooth decay as soon as he gets his first tooth. While most babies have healthy teeth, 5% or so develop a form of severe tooth decay called "baby bottle caries." Tooth decay occurs when sugar in liquids is in contact with the teeth for a prolonged time. Milk, formula, juice, Kool-Aid, soft drinks, and other similar drinks all contain sugar. If a child falls asleep with a bottle in the mouth or constantly drinks from a bottle during the day, the sugar coats the upper teeth. Normal bacteria in the mouth change the sugar to an acid, which gradually dissolves the protective tooth enamel and allows tooth decay to occur. Once started, baby caries can progress so rapidly that the teeth are totally destroyed in a matter of months. To protect your baby from this condition, follow the following guidelines:

- Make sure your baby gets adequate fluoride, from supplements or fluoridated water.
- Don't allow your baby to "graze" throughout the day or to use the bottle as a toy or a daytime companion. Substituting a pacifier is OK, but don't put sweeteners on the nipple.
- Don't bottle-feed your baby until he falls asleep. This is the most common cause of bottle dependency and will eventually cause sleep problems, because your child will expect a bottle as a transition into sleep, even following normal awakenings during the night. Separate the last bottle-feeding of the evening from bedtime. NEVER let your baby have a bottle in bed at night or during naps!
- Don't allow your infant to have a tote or companion bottle during the day. Don't substitute a bottle for a pacifier, security object, toy, or being held. Give a bottle only when it's time to eat.
- Continue to encourage your child to learn to drink from a cup. This is a gradual process; most children need months to learn to prefer a cup to a bottle.

SLEEP

A regular bedtime hour and routine are important. Babies enjoy looking at picture books. You may want to read one regularly with your child. A favorite blanket or stuffed animal may help your baby feel secure at bedtime. At this age, children should be sleeping through the night without feeding. They may wake on occasion, but should be able to put themselves back to sleep. And remember: NEVER let your child go to bed with a bottle or cup!

For more information, see the **Kids Plus Sleep Handout** available on our web site:
<http://www.kidspluspgh.com/upload/Kids+SleepHandout.pdf>

DEVELOPMENT & DISCIPLINE

Many babies at this age develop “stranger anxiety.” They can tell the difference between familiar faces and strangers, and may react to strangers with anxiety or even fear.

At this age, babies learn what “no” means. Saying “no” calmly and firmly and either taking away what your child is getting into or removing her from the situation is a good way to teach what “no” means. If your child continues to do what you told him not to do, you can put her in a playpen for 1 minute without any toys or attention from you.

Give your baby a choice of toys to play with and praise him for whichever one he chooses. During play, give lots of kisses and hugs. Peek-a-boo is a favorite game. Encourage vocalization and communication – imitate your baby’s sounds, and play social games to help develop interaction and imitation.

INJURY PREVENTION

Make certain that your baby’s car seat is installed correctly. Read and follow the instructions that come with the car seat and the car’s owner’s manual. Use the car seat EVERY time your child is in a car.

All babies should be restrained in a rear-facing car seat, in the rear seat of the car. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that all infants and toddlers should ride in a rear-facing safety seat until age 2, or until they reach the highest weight and height allowed by their car seat’s manufacturer. If your child reaches 20 pounds but is not one year old, he will most likely have outgrown his infant carrier. In that case, he may need to move up into a child car seat. Many car seats come in reversible models, so you can face him backward and reverse the seat to front-facing once he reaches 2 years.

Check your home for all accident hazards, sharp objects, table edges, medicines, and household poisons. The last two items should be kept out of the child’s reach or in locked cabinets. Survey all areas accessible to the baby, and empty all those areas of anything that may be of harm to the baby.

Windows are a potential source of danger for curious exploring infants. Be sure windows are closed and locked, or have guards on them to prevent infants from leaning up against a screen (screens fall out easily, and the weight of an infant can often push through a screen). Never underestimate your child's ability to climb!

Use gates on stairs. Be sure they fit snugly – babies can often hit with enough force to dislodge a loose-fitting or expandable gate. The release mechanism should be on the outside, away from the baby, so she has a harder time releasing the gate. Playpens are excellent islands of safety when you need to put the baby down and turn your attention elsewhere for a few minutes.

Insert plastic plugs in electrical outlets to prevent your baby from putting anything into the plug.

Insulate the junction points of extension cords with electrical tape to prevent your child from partially opening them and creating an electrocution risk.

Avoid using appliances with dangling electrical cords that the baby might grab onto. Also, keep in mind that a baby may pull down tablecloths, lamps, and drawers as he starts to stand. All of these can injure him if he pulls an object down onto himself.

Never leave a baby unattended in a tub of water or a pool, no matter how shallow.

If your baby accidentally ingests something poisonous or hazardous, call the **Poison Control Center** immediately at 412-681-6669.

SMOKE & CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTORS

Houses should have at least one smoke detector on each level. Many safety experts recommend one in each bedroom, as well as a carbon monoxide (CO) detector for the house. Be sure to check the batteries at least twice a year to be sure they are still functioning properly. Your family should have an escape plan in case of fire, including multiple exit sites, and a safe place to meet outside so you can be sure everyone is out safely.

We also caution against passive smoke exposure of any kind. Our recommendation for the health of your baby is no smoking. The more smoke your child is exposed to, the higher her chance of developing more colds, lung infections, ear infections, allergies, asthma problems, and cancer. The best thing for your child's health is for you not to smoke at all. Even if you don't smoke near your child, chemicals from smoking stay with you on your clothes and on your body. If you must smoke, smoke outside the house, and remove your coat or jacket when you come back in. Never smoke inside or in the car. Even if your child is in another room or not in the car at the moment, she will still be exposed to lingering, harmful chemicals later.

SUN SAFETY

To minimize exposure to harmful Ultraviolet radiation (UV rays) and to help reduce your child's risk of developing skin cancer and premature aging of their skin, keep a few sun safety tips in mind. The sun's rays are at their strongest during the early afternoon (11 am to 3 pm), so be extra careful of sun exposure during these times. Try and keep your child in the shade when possible; umbrellas, hats, and light clothing can help. If your child must be out in the sun, be sure to use a children's sunscreen with an SPF of at least 30. Keep in mind that sunscreen helps lessen sun damage; it doesn't prevent it completely.

WALK-IN HOURS

We offer no-appointment necessary Walk-In Hours at both offices:

All Day, Every Day at Cranberry/Seven Fields

Weekday Mornings, 8:15 to 9:30am at Pleasant Hills and Squirrel Hill/Greenfield

Weekday Evenings, 6:00pm to 8:00pm

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday at Pleasant Hills

Monday and Thursday at Squirrel Hill/Greenfield.

Weekends at all three offices.

These hours are to address routine health problems such as sore throat, cold symptoms, fever, rash, and ear pain. They are not designed to evaluate chronic problems. If you Walk In, you'll be seen on a first-come, first-served basis.

You can read more about Walk-In Hours on our Kids Plus web site, www.kidspluspgh.com.

QUESTIONS & CONCERNS

If you feel you need additional advice between regular check-ups, you can post questions to our Facebook page or telephone us during office hours. Facebook, where we answer questions sometimes as quickly as in a few minutes, is a great place to ask about general, non-pressing issues. (You can also check the Doctor's Notes library on our web site, which features well over one hundred different topics covered by our Kids Plus Providers.) For more detailed and pressing health questions, it's best to call. Either way, we're always happy to provide counseling and guidance. It's both our job and our pleasure!

When calling after office hours, your call will be answered by an answering machine. If you have a concern that can't wait for regular office hours, please leave your name, your child's name (with spelling), and your phone number, and we'll return your call usually within an hour or so. If you have an emergency that requires an ambulance or paramedics, call 911 *first*. If you have an emergency that can't wait for a call back and need to have the doctor urgently paged (such as seizures, respiratory illness with labored breathing, suspected dehydration, or similar conditions), the recorded message will give you the answering service's phone number, and they can reach the doctor on call for the emergency.

AND REMEMBER...

We have a wonderful, 24/7/365 resource for parents at our **Kids Plus Facebook Page**. Like us on Facebook, and follow along with our great Kids Plus Social Media Community! You'll also find us on Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, Vimeo, and Pinterest.

You can access the **Kids Plus Patient Portal** 24/7/365 on your computer, tablet, or smart phone. No matter where you are, you can always see and print many of your child's medical records, including growth charts, immunization records, prescriptions, lab results, and visit notes. It's like having a Kids Plus virtual office right at your fingertips.

We look forward to seeing you at your 9-Month Well Visit!