

What to Expect During This Visit

Your doctor and/or nurse will probably:

- 1. Check your baby's weight, length, and head circumference** and plot the measurements on the growth charts.
- Do a screening test that helps with the early identification of **developmental delays**.
- 3. Ask questions, address concerns, and offer advice** about how your baby is:

Eating. Your baby should be eating a variety of baby foods, in addition to regular feedings of breast milk or formula. Your baby can probably drink from a cup and may try to self-feed with his or her fingers.

Peeing and pooping. You may notice a change in the color and consistency your baby's poopy diapers as you introduce new foods. Tell your doctor if your baby has diarrhea or has stools that are hard, dry, or difficult to pass.

Sleeping. The average amount of daily sleep is about 12 to 16 hours. Your baby is probably still taking two naps a day — one in the morning and another sometime after lunch — but every baby is different. Waking at night is common at this age.

Developing (milestones). By 9 months, it's common for many babies to:

- say "mama" and "dada"
- understand "no"
- sit without support
- pull to stand
- walk along furniture ("cruising")
- start to use thumb and forefinger to grasp objects (pincer grasp)
- wave bye-bye
- enjoy playing peek-a-boo

There's a wide range of normal, and children develop at different rates. Talk to your doctor if you're concerned about your child's development.

4. Do a physical exam with your baby undressed while you are present. This will include an eye exam, listening to your baby's heart and feeling pulses, checking hips, and paying attention to your baby's movements.

5. Update immunizations. Immunizations can protect babies from serious childhood illnesses, so it's important that your child receive them on time. Immunization schedules can vary from office to office, so talk to your doctor about what to expect

6. Order a blood test. Your doctor may check for lead exposure or anemia.

Looking Ahead

Here are some things to keep in mind until your baby's next checkup at 12 months:

Feeding

1. If you're **breastfeeding**, continue for 12 months or for as long as you and your baby desire. Breastfed babies weaned before 12 months should be given iron-fortified formula. Wait until 12 months to switch from formula to cow's milk.
2. Don't give **juice** unless your doctor recommends it. Avoid sugary drinks like sodas.
3. If there's a history of **food allergies** in your family, talk to your doctor before introducing new foods.
4. Pay attention to signs your baby is **hungry or full**.
5. Pull the highchair up to the table during meals. Your baby will start to show interest in **table foods**. Give your baby a variety of tastes and textures, including foods that are pureed, mashed, and in soft lumps.
6. Give your child soft **finger foods**.
7. Avoid foods that can cause **choking**, such as whole grapes, raisins, popcorn, pretzels, nuts, hot dogs, sausages, chunks of meat, hard cheese, raw veggies, or hard fruits.

Routine Care & Safety

1. If your baby **wakes up** at night and doesn't settle back down, offer reassurance that you're there, but try not to pick up, play with, or feed your baby.
2. **Separation anxiety** often starts around 9 months. Keep good-byes short but loving. Your baby may be upset at first, but will calm down soon after you're gone.
3. Continue to keep your baby in a **rear-facing car seat** in the back seat until age 2, or whenever your child reaches the weight or height limit set by the car-seat manufacturer.
4. Avoid **sun exposure** by keeping your baby covered and in the shade when possible. You may use sunscreen (SPF 30) if shade and clothing don't offer enough protection.
5. Brush your child's **teeth** with a soft toothbrush and a tiny bit of toothpaste (about the size of a grain of rice) twice a day. Schedule a dentist visit soon after the first tooth appears or by 1 year of age.
6. Keep up with **childproofing**:
 - Install safety gates and tie up drapes, blinds, and cords.
 - Keep locked up/out of reach: choking hazards; medicines; toxic substances; items that are hot, sharp, or breakable.
 - Keep emergency numbers, including **the Poison Help Line at 1-800-222-1222**, near the phone.
 - To **prevent drowning**, close bathroom doors, keep toilet seats down, and always supervise around water (including baths).
7. Sing, talk, play, and **read** to your baby. Babies learn best this way.
8. **TV viewing** (or other screen time, including computers) is not recommended for babies this young.
9. Protect your child from **secondhand smoke**, which increases the risk of heart and lung disease. Secondhand vapor from e-cigarettes is also harmful.
10. Protect your child from **gun injuries** by not keeping a gun in the home. If you do have a gun, keep it unloaded and locked away. Lock up ammunition separately. Make sure kids cannot access the keys.
11. Talk to your doctor if you're concerned about your **living situation**. Do you have the things that you need to take care of your baby? Do you have enough food, a safe place to live, and health insurance? Your doctor can tell you about community resources or refer you to a social worker.

These checkup sheets are consistent with the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)/Bright Futures guidelines.



Note: All information is for educational purposes only. For specific medical advice, diagnoses, and treatment, consult your doctor.

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