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Baby Business (A publication of Concord Children's Clinic) – 9 Month Edition

9 month edition: This month's baby business will discuss what parents should expect when the baby is around 9 months old.

Immunizations

Your baby will receive Immunizations today, according to the currently recommended schedule.

Nutrition

At this age your baby may take breast milk or formula 4 times a day.

- **DO NOT** let your baby take bottles of formula or juice to bed as it may cause tooth decay and ear infections. **DO NOT** let your baby carry a bottle around when she is not feeding to help make weaning easier. Start substituting a cup for daytime drinking water and formula.
- Most babies can handle finger foods such as toast, teething biscuits, dry cereals, cheese slices, canned or soft fruit, crackers, cooked vegetables, cookies and bread. Babies may have dairy product but should stay on breast milk or formula until at least 1 year of age.
- **AVIOD** foods that can cause choking such as hot dogs, nuts, popcorn, raw carrots, small candy, grapes and raisins.
- Babies at 9 months of age can try new foods like eggs, fish and peanut butter.

Development

If not doing so already, over the next few months your baby will be rolling, crawling, pulling up to a standing position and eventually walking.

- Some children may walk before 1 year of age, but many do not until 15-18 months.
- Language skills gradually emerge during this period at this age. Your baby may only say 2 or 3 words now, but probably understands many more. Talk, sing and read to your baby. He/she may start to imitate your speech and talk with you.
- If you leave the room or get out of his/her sight, he/she may cry or scream in distress. This is very stressful for a parent. Allow time for your baby to adjust to caretakers before you leave. Let your baby get involved playing with a favorite toy and then say goodbye and leave quickly. The tears and distress last only for a few minutes and are only made worse by prolonged or repeated goodbyes. This separation anxiety usually persists until 18 months of age.

Discipline

It is not time to start thinking about discipline. Discipline does not mean punishment, but rather protecting your baby from danger and teaching him/her right from wrong.

- Parents should focus on setting safe and firm limits for your baby. At times you may have to physically move him/her or redirect his/her interest from something hazardous. Babies have short term memories and begin to understand limits only after repeated exposures.
- Praise your baby when he/she behaves in a favorable way. Parents do need to enforce the same set of rules on a consistent basis. Any good approach requires creativity, patience, energy, gentleness and a sense of humor.

Home Safety

Please remember that the biggest threat to your baby's life and health are accidents.

- Please use gates on all staircases and doors. **DO NOT** use a baby walker.
- Be sure there are plug protectors in ALL empty electrical outlets in your home. Cabinet locks should be installed in the kitchen and the bathroom.

Poison Control

Be aware of the poisonous substances in your home that your baby may ingest.

- Be sure that all medicines and cleaning supplies are locked up and out of your baby's reach.
- Call our office or the Poison Control Center **IMMEDIATELY** if your baby eats something poisonous. Have Syrup of Ipecac on hand to make your baby vomit but use it **ONLY** if your doctor or the Poison Control Center tells you to do so. Keep the poison control # posted by your telephone. **1-800-222-1222**

Burn Protection

- Be sure to check the hot water temperature in your home. The correct water temperature should be set at less than **120 degrees F**.
- Do not carry or hold your baby while cooking or carrying hot foods or liquids.

Choking Safety

NEVER leave small objects or food within your baby's reach.

- Do not feed your baby hot dogs, raw carrots or grapes. Cut food into thin slices to prevent choking.
- **BE PREPARED:** Ask our office for instructions on choking first aid.

Drowning Safety

NEVER leave your baby alone near any water for any moment. Drowning can happen in the shallowest water.

- Please remember to empty water from bathtubs, pails or any other container of water immediately after use. Always keep the bathroom door and commode lid closed.
- If you have a swimming pool, install a fence to separate your house or baby's play area from the swimming pool.

Car Safety

Car crashes are a great risk to your baby's health and life. The correct use of a car seat will prevent injuries and deaths that occur in car crashes.

- Make sure that your baby's car seat is installed correctly.
- For this age, car seat should be **REAR** facing and placed in the **BACK** seat until your baby is 24 months old.
- Please remember, you **MUST** use your baby's car seat **EVERY** time your baby rides in a car.

Next Checkup: 12 MONTHS

Your baby's next checkup is at 12 months of age. Regular **WELL BABY** checkups are done at 1,2,4,6,9 and 12 months of age. These checkups usually involve immunizations and other preventive health services. Keeping your baby up to date on checkups and immunizations is one of the best things you can do for your baby's health.