

# Nine Months



## Informational Handout from your Pediatrician

Height \_\_\_\_\_ Weight \_\_\_\_\_ Head \_\_\_\_\_

**Moving** If your baby is not moving yet, he will be soon. Get that house child proofed! While in the car your baby should still be backward facing until 12 months and 20 pounds. Both one year and 20 pounds. Some babies revisit night awakenings now, because they are ready to try out new skills as soon as they awaken! Additionally, they may want to see a parent. Certainly, don't feed the little night owl. Say goodnight again and let him figure out that night time is for sleep.

**Dinner Time** By now your baby is probably quite the connoisseur of food in a jar. Meats are now fair game which means you can try stage 3 foods. This is quite a change in texture and may require some getting used to. Your baby will start to increasingly prefer table foods over time, if he doesn't already. There are only a few things to avoid at this time. Namely, nut based foods (such as peanut butter), shellfish, +/- eggs (depending on family history of allergies), honey from a jar, and foods that pose choking hazards. Otherwise, go for it. As before, introduce new foods systematically so you can recognize a food allergy if you see it. You shouldn't switch from formula to whole milk until baby is at or very near his birthday. Work on that cup. The bottle should end around a year of age.

**Development** Put 3 babies this age in a room and watch them. What you will likely see is 3 babies working hard on mastering three different areas of development. One may be trying to stand and cruise along, another may be working on different sounds, and another may be working on fine motor control with hands and fingers. Because of this, don't panic if your motor mouth isn't crawling or your human scooter isn't talking. We will help you decide if any differences are really delays or just variants of normal. Read to your baby if you are not already doing so.

**Pacifier** Okay, it is important what you do here. The suck reflex is dwindling. Pacifiers limit speech, limit self calming maneuvers, may increase ear infections, and will definitely cost you money at the orthodontist some day if not weaned. A reasonable goal is to rid the child of this by his birthday. If your child replaces it with the thumb, then it is your choice as to whether to prolong pacifier for now. Otherwise, keeping it in the crib for bedtime and naptime is reasonable for a few more months. More and more, however, you should not "plug" the child in just because they are crying. If baby is fussing because he is tired, hungry, lonely, whatever, then address that need when you can. Resist the temptation to make him quiet for a few minutes with pacifier. A casual interest now can become a strong addiction later if pacifier continues to be used in this manner. Before you know it, baby will ask for it by name, making it much more difficult to remove. "Out of sight, out of mind" predominates for now. Take advantage of that fact and leave that pacifier in the crib out of sight.

**Safety** Touched on above. If your baby ingests something, call the Poison Control center first at 528-6048. They have the pertinent information at their fingertips. Cruisers will pull on anything they can reach, preferably cords attached to hot items like curling irons and clothes irons. Keep these things put up. Burns are no fun at all. Be especially vigilant when visiting others or having visitors as they are more likely to have accessible pills and hazards.

**Discipline** Believe it or not, it starts now. A firm "NO" with redirection or hand slap will get their attention. Don't be afraid to hurt feelings. It is time for the parents to decide that they are in charge. No parent should ever feel as though they have all of the answers, but you sure know more than your child. (Until, of course, they become adolescents and then your brain turns to mush and you know nothing!!) 9month olds, 2year olds, 5 year olds, 10 year olds are not certified to be in charge of a family. Unfortunately, more and more families are designed with the children at the center and therefore in control.

**Immunizations** None scheduled. Next shots at 12 months. That visit needs to occur on or after the birthday. There are some shots which don't count unless baby has had birthday.

**Cake Time** At the 12 month visit we will ask about that bottle and pacifier. Also, we will check the HCT to make sure iron supply is adequate.

**Appointment Line: 757-3535**