

## INFANT CARE FROM AGE 6 TO 9 MONTHS

[www.northfultonpediatrics.com](http://www.northfultonpediatrics.com)

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### **SUGGESTED DIET**

Breast milk or iron-fortified formula is still the preferred source of milk for the first 12 months in order to have healthy bones and teeth, and to prevent anemia. Try scheduling 4 formula or breast feedings daily, to total no more than 24 to 32 ounces each 24 hours, including that used for cereal. These amounts may decrease as your child eats more solids. All breast-fed infants need to take a vitamin D supplement daily unless they are taking more than 17 oz. of formula per day. We recommend D-Vi-Sol, 1 ml by mouth once a day. All breast-fed babies also need foods with iron now.

**Cereal:** Up to 4-6 tablespoons twice a day.

**Fruits:** Up to 4-6 tablespoons twice a day.

**Vegetables:** Alternate offering dark yellow or orange and dark green vegetables, up to 5- 6 tablespoons daily.

**Meats/Proteins:** Start with 1 tablespoon at a time, gradually increasing to 5- 6 tablespoons as tolerated once a day. You may also offer mashed tofu or pureed legumes if you desire. Whole milk (4% milk fat) yogurt may also be offered, using flavors without added chunks of fruit, ie: vanilla, banana.

### **FEEDING TIPS**

- Introduce only one new food every 3-5 days. Watch for a rash, vomiting, or diarrhea as a reaction to the new food. If one of these occurs, stop the new food and wait at least one week before trying it again. Do not use mixed vegetables or fruits until you have tried each ingredient separately.
- A jar of baby food meat is all meat. A jar of vegetable-meat is almost all vegetables with very little meat. If your infant likes combination dinners, it is best to buy a jar of meat and a jar of vegetables, and mix them yourself.
- Resist the temptation to offer baby desserts and puddings. These are a source of wasted calories and sugar your child does not need.
- Your infant is developing new skills. Encourage eating from a spoon, drinking from a cup, and gradually picking up finger foods to feed himself or herself. Feeding time will be messy! Let your infant practice drinking from a cup during bath time.
- When your baby can sit up well and you can see that her swallowing of spooned foods has improved, (usually around 8-9 months), finger foods can be given. To avoid choking, it is important that your baby is able to coordinate chewing and swallowing. Even then, you must carefully watch your child to see that she can handle each food until it is finished. Some good finger foods are: puffs, crisp toast or crackers, teething biscuits, cubes of bananas, peaches, pears, cooked carrots, green beans, and Cheerios.
- Avoid honey until 12 months of age (could cause botulism).

### **SLEEPING**

At this age, some babies may decrease the length and/or frequency of naps while others do so later in the first year. You may also notice that your baby, who normally had undisturbed night-time sleep for the past several months, is now awakening and crying. Rest assured! This is a temporary phase presumed to be due to developmental changes. Continue to place your baby in her crib, drowsy, but awake, to encourage self-soothing. You should check on your baby immediately; however, keep the time spent brief. Do not give extra bottles, take her to your bed, or rock her to sleep. Doing these may encourage night-time awakening and could set you up for problems later if awakening becomes a habit. A regular bedtime routine becomes helpful at this age and provides extra reassurance to your child.

### **ELIMINATION**

As your baby begins eating at regular times, she will have bowel movements at regular times as well. They may change in number, consistency, and color as additional foods are added.

### **DEVELOPMENT/PLAY**

At this age your baby can or soon will be able to: be pulled to a sitting position without head lag, may sit up alone momentarily, and may be able to sit in a high chair with back straight for a sustained period. Your infant may be able to roll over from stomach to back and back to stomach now. She is able to bear weight on her legs when held in a standing position. This is safe and won't hurt the legs at all. Your baby can also reach for her feet and may put them in her mouth. She can pick up an object when dropped. She may be transferring objects from one hand to the other. Play is the work of a baby! Your baby may like to bounce, swing, reach out for you, pick up objects (only to drop them again), and bang things together. Your unbreakable kitchenware makes wonderful toys: measuring cups, spoons, pots, pans, and containers are great fun.

Your baby is developing a personality. She is beginning to recognize parents, family, and other familiar faces but responds to strangers or unfamiliar faces with fear. She may also cry whenever she cannot see you. She laughs out loud and has definite likes and dislikes. She "babbling" to toys and mirrors, or other inanimate objects, and makes consonant sounds (B's, M's, etc.).

As always, listen to, talk to, and sing to your baby. Respond enthusiastically to her coos and babbles. Try to talk to her in adult language most of the time although it is tempting to use "baby talk". Play peek-a-boo and pat-a-cake. Read to your infant and provide her with soft plastic/cloth books.

The American Academy of Pediatrics strongly recommends protecting the developing brains of children younger than 2 years of age by avoiding screen media (TV/computer/video) altogether. This includes educational material that comes in these forms.

### **TEETHING**

The first teeth usually erupt between 5-12 months of age. Try treating with a cold (but not frozen) teething ring and Tylenol, if uncomfortable. As teeth erupt, keep them clean by wiping with a soft washcloth once or twice daily.

### **SAFETY**

When babies are crawling and exploring, try to prevent accidents before they happen. Babies need constant watching!

- Avoid toys with sharp edges or removable parts, because everything will go into your child's mouth.
- Beware of items with small batteries or magnets. These can be very dangerous if swallowed.
- Remove breakable objects from the floor or low tables.
- Cover all unused electrical outlets, and remove all dangling cords from their reach.
- Never leave your child unattended in the bathtub.
- Always use an approved car seat, rear-facing in the back seat. All infants and toddlers should ride in a rear-facing car safety seat in the backseat until they are 2 years old or until they reach the highest weight and height allowed by the manufacturer of your car seat. You may need to switch from an infant care seat to a convertible car seat when your infant weighs more than 20 pounds depending on your brand of seat. ([www.nhtsa.gov/Safety/CPS](http://www.nhtsa.gov/Safety/CPS))
- Keep all detergents, soaps, cleaners, and medicine locked up and out of reach. Remove plants from reach.
- To avoid accidental burns, set your water heater back to 120° F.
- Use gates on stairways.
- Remember to use sunscreen on your infant.
- Post the Poison Control number (**404-616-9000**) by your phone. In case your baby ingests medication or poison, call the Poison Control first for instructions. Make sure other caretakers (grandparents, baby-sitters) also have the Poison Control number on hand.

### **FEVER MANAGEMENT**

Please call our office if you have concerns about your child's temperature. You may treat your child's fever with either of the following:

**Tylenol (Active ingredient is acetaminophen)**

**Advil, Motrin (Active ingredient is ibuprofen)**

**Your child's next well child care visit should be at 9 months of age.**

### **Additional Resources for Parents**

**Visit our web site at [www.northfultonpediatrics.com](http://www.northfultonpediatrics.com)**

Caring For Your Baby and Young Child, Birth to Age 5, by The American Academy of Pediatrics

[www.healthychildren.org](http://www.healthychildren.org)

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