

# your child @<sup>™</sup>

## 9 to 12 months

highlights of what's happening at this stage of your child's development ...

As your child approaches her first birthday, she may be crawling and trying to take her first steps.

### Your child's health



**The Well Visit** Your baby should visit the doctor at 9 months. Your doctor will give vaccinations that will keep your child healthy and strong. Schedule your next visit. Your baby will need to come back at 12 months.

Let your doctor know if your baby:

- Drags one side of her body after crawling for over a month.
- Does not point to objects or pictures.
- Does not look for objects that she sees you hide.

**Dental Health** By age 1, your baby should have his first dental visit and then see the dentist every six months.

**Sleep** At this age, your baby still needs 2 or 3 naps a day. Put your baby to sleep at night between 6 and 8 pm.

#### Safety Tip

Never give your baby whole grapes, popcorn, raw vegetables, hot dogs, nuts, or candy.

**Nutrition** Your baby should drink up to 24 ounces of breast milk or formula and eat 3 meals per day. It is important to let your baby practice picking up food and feeding himself. Serving tips include:

- Give soft finger foods such as small pieces of cheese, cooked vegetables, soft fruit, or Cheerios.<sup>®</sup>
- Cut food into safe, bite-sized pieces.
- Around your child's first birthday, talk with your doctor about switching from a bottle to a cup.

Watch your baby as he eats. Is he refusing or having a hard time chewing the pieces of food? Then stop serving. But be sure to try again in a few weeks.

### Nurturing your child

**Behavior** At this age, you will need to set limits for your baby.

- Stay one step ahead. Distract a child from unsafe objects and show her an activity that may get her attention.

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### Nurturing your child, continued

#### Tip

Never spank or hit your child.

#### Behavior, continued

- Save “no” for safety issues. If a child hears “no” too much, it will lose meaning to her. Instead, let your child know what she can or should do.
- Use signs and signals to let your child know how to act. Give a shoulder pat or thumbs up when your child is doing something good.

**Attachment** Your child may have a hard time when her parent or caregiver leaves. To help, you can:

- Say goodbye. Explain that you are going to leave but that you’ll return. Do not sneak out.
- Give her a teddy bear or a blanket to help her feel close to you.

#### Early Learning

Encourage your baby’s natural curiosity through talking, reading, singing, and playing with him.

- Play hide-and-seek with objects. Your child will like to see things come and go.
- Look at your baby when you talk and read with him.
- Point to the objects and people you see all the time and name them.
- Sing nursery rhymes and songs that repeat and have hand motions. Try *The Wheels on the Bus*.

### Your child’s safety

#### Around the House

- Put gates at stairs. Cover edges of furniture. Put safety latches on drawers, cabinets, and toilets.
- Cover electrical outlets. Tie up cords hanging from blinds.
- Keep cleaning supplies, medicines, and sharp objects out of reach.
- Call poison control right away if you think your child has swallowed poison: 1-800-222-1222.

#### In the Car

By law, your baby must ride in a secure, rear-facing car seat. He must ride in the back seat of your car.