



Anticipatory Guidance for Parents: 6 months

Child's name: _____ Date _____ Height _____ Weight _____

Immunizations received: _____

Next visit: _____ Immunizations needed: _____

Remember to bring your baby's vaccination record with you.

Your six month old is busier every day. You will see many new skills over the next few months. This sheet is meant to answer some common questions parents have about this age.

Nutrition

Your baby should take breast milk or formula with iron 4 times a day. Babies are more distracted at this age, and may not seem as interested.

When your baby is ready, start giving pureed foods: Stage 1 (very mashed and smooth), one at a time, in small amounts, and in this order:

- Baby cereals (rice, barley, oat, cream of wheat)
- Vegetables (plain)
- Fruits (plain)
- Meats (plain)

Add one new food every 5 to 7 days. Watch for signs of food sensitivity such as vomiting, diarrhea, hives, or wheezing after each change. Avoid fruit desserts and meat/vegetable combination dinners.

Give your baby only 2-4 oz. of juice per day after they are taking solid foods more than 3 times per day.

After eating pureed foods for a while, many babies are ready to begin a few soft finger foods such as:

- Banana pieces
- Teething biscuits
- Soft crackers

Avoid fish, eggs, citrus juices, and cow's milk because of possible protein allergies. Babies should not have cow's milk during the first year of life.

Clean your child's teeth with a soft brush. You do not need toothpaste. You may continue to give Tylenol or teething rings during times of drooling or fussiness.

Diaper Changes

Stools will be more colorful and change in firmness as more foods are included.

Sleeping

Morning and afternoon naps are still common at this age. Some babies still wake for a nighttime feeding. To help your baby begin to develop good sleeping habits:

- Develop a bedtime routine that you stick to every night.
- Put your baby down in a quiet, dark, or dimly lit room.
- Put your baby to bed when tired but not fully asleep to ensure they know their bed is the place to fall asleep.

Lower the crib mattress to the lowest setting before the baby is able to stand.

Development

Babies develop at their own rate. During the next two months, you may notice that your baby can:

- Enjoy simple games (peek-a-boo, pat-a-cake)
- Sit without support
- Begin to crawl
- Stand with support
- Bang objects together
- Enjoy praise and applause
- Imitate people
- Understands “no” and “bye-bye”
- Show signs of fear about things such as baths, heights, and unfamiliar people.

Learning Through Play

Babies learn to communicate during typical daily routines. Talk to your baby a lot. When you look at books together, point to, name and describe the pictures. Read to your baby every day.

Place your child in a high chair or upright seat to encourage visual exploration and verbal interaction with you and others.

Safety

Safety is important as your baby gets around more easily now.

Use an infant car seat correctly when taking your baby in a car. Car seats should be in the back seat, and face the rear of the car until your baby is at least 1 year old and weighs at least 20 pounds.

Don't use baby walkers. Falls are common and injuries can be serious. Walkers can also delay the development of walking skills.

Avoid toys with small parts that can be swallowed or inhaled.

Have smoke detectors in working order.

Never leave your baby near water or in a bathtub alone; not even to answer the phone.

Never leave your baby alone in the car, even for a few minutes.

Use a lotion form of sunscreen (SPF 15 or higher) when baby is in the sun and re-apply often. Avoid using an alcohol based product.

Use a safety gate to block stairways. Always close the doors that lead to stairs.

Keep the baby out of the kitchen if the stove or oven is on.

Lower the crib mattress so your baby won't climb or fall out. Always keep the crib rails in the highest position.

Many common plants are poisonous, so keep them out of reach.

Store cleaning supplies and harmful substances out of reach or behind locked doors to prevent poisoning or injury.

Place covers on electrical outlets. Secure cords, surge protectors, lamps so that baby doesn't pull appliances off tables.

Are your children safe at home? Please talk to your doctor, nurse practitioner, or social worker if you have any concerns about safety for your child.

Positive Parenting

Parenting is the biggest job you'll ever do. Support and information are important. Be sure to reach out for help when you need to. Talk to your health care provider about concerns you have about your child's behavior.

Preventing Illness

Make sure everyone in the family washes hands:

- Before and after preparing foods, eating or feeding your child
- Before and after using the bathroom or changing a diaper

Don't smoke in the home or car.

Check for chipping paint. Make sure³ painted surfaces are lead-free. Lead particles can also be found in household dust and outside soil. To help prevent your baby from swallowing lead, wash hands and face often, especially before eating or drinking.

When should I call the clinic?

- Rectal temperature higher than 100.4
- Feeding problems: not eating or drinking as much as usual
- Decrease in wet diapers when ill
- Decrease in play or interaction
- If you are worried about your baby
- Trouble breathing-call 911

This sheet is not specific to your child, but provides general information. If you have any questions or concerns, many resources are available to help you.

Georgia Health Sciences Family Medicine Clinic

Appointments and Questions:

706-721-4588

Early childhood Special Education

Screening and services for developmental delay or disability are available through your county's Board of Education.

Richmond County BOE 706-826-1000

Columbia County BOE 706-541-0650

Aiken County BOE 803-641-2428

Health Departments

For information regarding car seat safety, WIC programs, hearing screenings, immunization programs, and “Babies Can’t Wait” for children with developmental delay:

Richmond County 706-721-5800

Fort Gordon WIC Clinic 706-787-4263

C&Y Clinic (GHS) 706-721-2341

M&I (GHS) 706-721-3886

South Augusta Clinic 706-790-0661

Columbia County:

- Appling clinic 706-541-1318
- Evans clinic 706-868-3330
- Grovetown clinic 706-556-3727

Burke County: 706-554-3456

Aiken County 803-642-1687

Child Abuse Reporting

706-721-3381

Committee for Missing Children

1-800-525-8204 (24 hr) and call 911

Smoking Cessation

For tips on how to quit smoking, speak to your physician or call the Quit Line 1-800-270-STOP.

Second hand smoke has been proven to cause and worsen childhood asthma and lung cancer. Keep your baby healthy.

Poison Control Center

Toll-free number 1-800-222-1222.

Do NOT make your child vomit.