

## 6 MONTH OLD WELL CHILD VISIT

### What do 6 Month Olds do?

- She makes more sounds (ba-ba, da-da) now than she did at 4 months, recognizes her name, reaches for people she knows and may cry if you leave her alone. She may also be afraid of strangers. Be patient because this can last several months!
- She moves things from one hand to the other, holds items in both hands at the same time and looks for toys that fall or roll away. She may even be able to sit on her own and rock back and forth. When they start to crawl, babies often crawl backward before moving forward.
- She should have different strategies for calming herself down, like grasping toys, putting things in his mouth or discovering new things to look at.
- She may still have fussy periods. If this is because of overtiredness or boredom, regular daily naps and having several short play activities will help.
- Babies this age learn to communicate during typical daily routines (bedtime, baths, diaper changes, dressing). Help your baby develop these communication skills by looking at books together, playing music and singing for her, imitating her sounds, reading to her and playing games like “pat-a-cake,” “peek-a-boo,” and “so big” with her. Avoid TV and videos.

## Things to Know about Caring for 6 Month Olds

### Feeding:

- Until 9 months of age, breast milk or iron-fortified formula is still your baby's primary food. 30 ounces a day is average, but your baby may take more or less.
- You can also feed your baby rice cereal. Start by mixing 1-2 Tablespoons of dry cereal with an ounce of formula/breastmilk in the morning and night. Eventually, she may eat up to 4 Tbsp. several times a day. It may take some time for your baby to get used to spoon-feeding.
- You can start Stage I baby foods between 5-6 months of age. Introduce one new food per week. You may also puree your own foods without salt or sugar. Enjoy this new stage of exploration!
- Avoid nuts, eggs, fish and shellfish until after 1 year.
- Try giving him solid foods before or after formula/breast a bottle 2-4 times a day at first with bottles as usual in between. He will transition to about 4 meals of solids and milk soon.
- You can start to give him small amounts of juice, but mix it with water and try giving it in a cup. Limit juice to less than 4 ounces in a day. Feed him in a bouncy seat or high chair so that you can look at each other.

### Sleeping Tips:

- Place your baby in his crib when he is drowsy but not asleep. Have a daily routine for naps (usually 2 per day), feedings and bedtime. This will help him learn to put herself to sleep and to sleep longer at night. You may be able to wean the middle of the night feed.
- Continue to put your baby to sleep on her back for the first year of life. She may roll over, and that is OK.
- Remember to lower the mattress in the crib before your child can sit up by herself, and always keep the sides of the crib raised when she is in it. To reduce the risk of suffocation, keep soft bedding or soft toys or bumpers out of the crib.

**Teeth:** As your baby begins teething, Tylenol and cool teething rings can help with pain. Ask your doctor if he needs fluoride supplements. You can help prevent cavities by brushing his teeth with a soft toothbrush and water, avoiding sugary food/drinks, and not leaving a bottle propped or in bed with him.

**Looking Ahead:**

- Soon you can let his little fingers practice eating finger foods! Hard foods like popcorn, peanuts, chewing gum, or candy are choking risks. Instead, give him soft foods like banana, avocado, or well-cooked vegetables.
- Colds, fevers and diarrheal illnesses are common, especially if your child is in daycare. Most of these illnesses are viral. Cough/cold medicines are not safe for babies. Tylenol and saline nasal spray are the only safe medications to give. After 6 months of age you can start giving your baby motrin as well.