



THE SIX MONTH OLD

DEVELOPMENT

- Rolls over and may creep on stomach (army crawl)
- Reaches for objects and holds them
- Sits leaning forward in a tripod position and usually falls over when he or she reaches for something
- Recognizes that someone is a stranger and may be afraid of them; cries when left alone in a room
- May begin to make consonant sounds like “da da da”, “ba ba ba”, “ma ma ma” (the start of babbling)

EATING

Eating is messy, because babies this age want to help you and touch the food. They do this by grabbing the spoon, squeezing the food through their fingers, and blowing bubbles with a mouth full of carrots. It helps for parents to keep their sense of humor. It may help to give your baby something to hold in each hand (spoon) while eating. Your baby should be taking iron-fortified cereal mixed with breast milk or formula from a spoon. Start introducing fruits, vegetables, and meats. Baby food may be purchased or made easily at home. For example, shred fresh carrots in a food processor, cook a few minutes in water until tender, and then puree in processor. Eat within a few days or freeze the puree in ice cube trays covered with plastic wrap. Pop the cubes out after they are frozen and store in zip lock bags. Most fruits and vegetables can be processed this way and the consistency can be made chunkier as your baby grows. Do not season or add sugar. Meats need to be processed with added thin baby rice cereal for better consistency. The frozen food cubes can be stored for more than a month and are easy to melt in a microwave. If your baby rejects the taste of a new food, try mixing it with a food he or she has accepted in the past. Avoid honey until one year. Never give your baby hard foods such as nuts or candy.

Your baby still needs breast milk or formula in addition to solids. If your infant bites down during breastfeeding, let him or her know that this is unacceptable with a firm “No bite!” Only use a bottle for formula or breastmilk. You can introduce a sippy cup at this time for a small amount of water. Do not let your baby have a bottle of formula or breastmilk in bed, because it can cause cavities if they continue this habit when teeth have erupted. **We do not recommend “feeding to fall asleep.”** Put your baby in the crib, well-fed but awake, and let him or her learn how to fall asleep. Now is a good time to transition your baby to his or her own room to sleep.

PLAY

Your baby might like for you to play peek-a-boo under a blanket or to carry him or her in a backpack while parents hike. When your baby can sit steady, he or she can transfer objects from hand to hand, from his or her hand to your hand, and from hand to mouth. Provide objects he or she can grasp and are also safe to chew.

SAFETY – POISON CONTROL 1-800-222-1222

- Time to start babyproofing the house. Electrical outlets should be covered. Put up all poisons, cleaning agents, and medicines. Keep all small objects out of reach. Gates for stairs, both top and bottom, are necessary before your baby begins to crawl.
- Do not leave your baby alone on a bed, in the yard, or in the tub. Do not leave your child in a carrier or car seat on a high surface. They are big enough to tip them over.
- Do not smoke or drink hot liquids while holding your baby. They are active, love to grab stuff, and may get burned.

NEXT CHECK UP IS AT 9 MONTHS OLD.