

# HEALTHY *and* SAFE at 9 Months

## Tips for Keeping Your Baby Healthy and Safe

### Playing with Your Baby

- Talk, sing, and read to your baby every day.
- Give your baby balls, toys that roll, blocks, and containers to play with.
- Try not to use TV, videos, and computers to entertain your baby.
- Show and tell your baby in simple words what you want your baby to do.
- Avoid scaring or yelling at your baby.

### Taking Care of Yourself and Your Family

- Take time for yourself and with your partner.
- Keep in touch with friends and family.
- Invite friends over or join a parent group.
- If you feel alone, your doctor or nurse can help with resources.
- Use only mature, trustworthy babysitters.
- If you feel unsafe in your home or have been hurt by someone, let your child's doctor or nurse know; they can help.

### Home Safety

- Empty buckets, pools, and tubs right after you use them.
- Place gates on stairs. Do not use a baby walker.
- Put window guards on windows that are on the second floor or higher. Keep furniture away from windows.
- Keep your baby in a high chair or playpen when in the kitchen.
- Never leave your baby alone in or near water, even in a bath seat or ring. Be within arm's reach at all times.



### Your Changing and Developing Baby

- Keep daily routines for your baby.
- Make the hour before bedtime loving and calm.
- Check on your baby during the night, but do not pick baby up if he or she wakes up.
  - This will help your baby learn to fall back asleep alone.
  - Crying when you leave is normal. Stay calm.
- Watch over your baby when exploring, both inside and outside the home.

## Feeding Your Baby

- Be patient as your baby learns to eat without help. Being messy is normal.
- Give 3 meals and 2–3 snacks each day.
- Do not force the baby to eat.
- Babies may say no to new food 10–12 times before they will try it. This is normal.
- Help your baby learn to hold and drink from a cup.

## Foods for Your Baby

- Start giving your baby more of the foods that you eat.
- Give your baby only healthy foods.
- Keep breastfeeding or formula-feeding until your baby is 1 year old. Do not switch to cow's milk.
- Do not give your baby soda, tea, coffee, juice, or flavored drinks.
- Try foods with different textures - thick or runny, lumpy or smooth.
- Do not give your baby peanut butter, nuts, soy and wheat foods, cow's milk, eggs, fish, or shellfish. Lots of people are allergic to these foods.

## Car Safety

- Your baby's car seat should be in the middle of the back seat and facing backwards in all vehicles.
- Keep your child's car safety seat facing backwards until your child is at least 2 years old or reaches the seat's height and weight limits.
- Always wear your seat belt.
- Never drive after using alcohol or drugs.

## Disciplining Your Baby

- Tell your baby in a nice way what to do ("Time to eat"), rather than what not to do.
- Use "No!" only when your baby is going to get hurt or hurt others.
- Make your home and yard safe so that you do not have to say "No!" often.
- Do things the way you want your baby to do them—you are your baby's role model.
- Try distracting your baby with a favorite toy if baby is doing something unsafe.
- Be consistent.

## Preventing Accidents

- Do not leave heavy or hot things on tablecloths that your baby could pull over.
- Put barriers around space heaters. Keep electrical cords out of your baby's reach.
- Never have a gun in your home. If you have a gun, store it unloaded and locked with the ammunition locked separately from the gun.
- Keep poisons, medications, and cleaning supplies locked up and out of your baby's sight and reach.
- Call the Poison Control Center (1-800-222-1222) if you are worried your child has eaten something harmful.

## What to Expect at your Baby's 12 Month Visit:

Your child's doctor will talk about -

- Setting rules and limits for your child
- Creating a calming bedtime routine
- Feeding your child
- Supervising your child
- Caring for your child's teeth

### To Learn More

- **Poison Control Center** 1-800-222-1222
- **Child Safety Seat Inspection** 1-866-SEATCHECK, 1-866-732-8243 or [www.seatcheck.org](http://www.seatcheck.org)
- **Immunizations** at [aap.org/immunization](http://aap.org/immunization)
- **MaineHealth Learning Resource Center** 1-866-609-5183 or <https://mainehealth.org/healthy-communities/learning-resource-center>
- **Barbara Bush Children's Hospital** [www.bbch.org](http://www.bbch.org)
- **American Academy of Pediatrics** [healthychildren.org](http://healthychildren.org)
- **2-1-1 Maine** (a directory of local services) 211 or 1-877-463-6207 or [211maine.org](http://211maine.org)
- **MaineHealth** [mainehealth.org](http://mainehealth.org)