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### YOUR GROWING CHILD...

Babies grow, change, and learn differently. Here are some tips to help you enjoy and keep your baby healthy and safe. Please contact us if you have questions or concerns about your baby. Metropolitan Pediatrics offers a 24/7 nurse triage line by contacting the scheduling line at each office.

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#### Health:

- Regular well visits are important to ensure normal growth and development.
  - Babies need a well child check at 6 months of age.
  - The next well child check is at 9 months of age.
- Appetite will vary depending on growth and activity.
  - Offer only breast milk or iron-fortified formula (cow's milk will be introduced at 12 months).
  - Introduce pureed "solid" foods.
  - Consider your child's readiness for small, soft "table" foods.
  - May nurse 5-7 times or take 20-32 ounces of formula per day. As solid food intake increases, you may notice milk intake decrease. Watch for cues from your baby.
  - Breastfed babies should take supplemental liquid vitamin D (400 IU per day) and include iron-rich foods in their diet (iron-fortified cereals or pureed meat, beans, eggs etc.)
  - Babies younger than 12 months of age should not have raw honey.
  - At 6 months you may introduce water via bottle or sippy cup.
- If you use well water: 1) make sure it is safe and 2) know the fluoride level. The county health department will test it for you if unknown.
- Babies start teething! Chewing on cold, soft objects will help with the pain.
  - It is recommended to start tooth brushing with the first tooth eruption to prevent cavities. Children's toothpaste with fluoride is recommended in small quantities (a grain of rice on the brush).
  - Juice or sugar-sweetened beverages are not recommended for children.
  - Do not put your child in their crib with a bottle. Prolonged nighttime feeding increases the risk of dental cavities.
- May sleep 10-12 hours at night and nap 2-3 times per day.
  - Can learn to fall asleep on their own. Put babies in their crib while still awake but sleepy.
  - Sleep surface should be firm. Extra soft surfaces (couches, waterbed or pillows), loose bedding or soft objects in the crib increase risk of SIDS (sudden infant death syndrome).
- Immunizations are recommended at 6 months of age to prevent serious illness in your child as well as to prevent the spread of infections.

#### Learning:

- Babies at this age usually:
  - Start to babble. Repeat the sounds back to them!
  - Sit well with support or all by themselves. Roll over.
  - Like to play on a blanket on the floor and bounce when held in a standing position.
  - Hold objects and move them from hand to hand.
  - Put everything in their mouth – watch them carefully.
  - May be shy and cling to you when you leave the room.

- It is not recommended to allow children less than 2 years of age to watch television or have 'screen time.' Limited use of interactive video chat (such as FaceTime) is ok.

### Safety:

- Your baby will soon be on the move! This is an important time to child proof your home! Use safety gates, door latches, and outlet covers. Ensure cords and window-drape strings are up and out of reach. Keep plastic bags, balloons, safety pins, and small chokeable objects out of your baby's reach.
- Infant walkers are not recommended. Use a stationary device such as a bouncy chair or swing instead.
- To prevent falling from elevated surfaces, keep one hand on your baby when on a changing table, sofa, counter, etc.
- Never tie a pacifier or any jewelry around your baby's neck or to her clothing due to the risk of choking/strangulation.
- Always use an approved, rear-facing car seat properly secured in the back seat.
- Don't let anyone smoke or vape around your baby.
- Keep hot water temperature below 120 degrees. Before bathing your baby, check the water temperature.
- Never leave your baby alone in a bath tub, no matter how little water is in it.
- Never warm your baby's bottle in the microwave.
- Don't drink, eat or hold hot liquids while holding onto your baby in case of spills.
- Never leave your baby unattended with a young sibling or pet.
- Use sunscreen and sun-protective clothing when spending time outside.
- Use smoke and carbon monoxide detectors and check them twice per year (such as at daylight savings time)
- Minnesota Poison Control: 1-800-222-1222
- Car seat clinic locations and schedule: <https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/ots/child-passenger-safety/Pages/car-seat-checks.aspx>