



MERCY MEDICAL GROUP

Pediatric Development - 9 Months

Date: _____

_____’s growth record

Weight: _____ pounds _____ ounces

Length: _____ inches

Head circumference: _____ inches

DEVELOPMENT

At this age, your baby can sit up with a straight back indefinitely without support. Babies may be able to pull themselves to a standing position and “cruise” (walk holding onto furniture) and may creep or crawl. They now grasp objects with a “pincher” grasp using their thumbs and forefingers, uncover hidden toys and release objects grasped by another person. They begin to make repetitive sounds such as “dada” and “mama” and respond to their name. They may play games such as peek-a-boo and patty-cake and may wave good bye.

STIMULATION

Encourage your baby’s vocalizations by continuing to talk and sing to him or her during feedings, dressings and playing. Read him or her books and show your baby pictures, talking about the pictures and pointing out objects in the pictures. Allow your baby to explore in a safe area of the home, free of small objects, plants and other things that may be dangerous. Provide him or her with plenty of toys such as stuffed animals, musical toys and balls; but remember that babies put most toys in their mouths, so avoid small toys and toys with sharp edges.

DISCIPLINE

As a baby’s mobility increases, the need to set and keep limits consistent also increases. Since a baby’s natural curiosity about everything he or she encounters is vital to normal development, you cannot allow that curiosity to endanger him or her. Clear and consistent limits are essential. Remember that your baby has a short memory, so you have to discourage the same behavior frequently. Use distraction, physical presence, structure and routines to do this.

Set a bedtime routine and stick to it. Have the baby continue to fall asleep in the crib, and as a general rule, discourage nighttime awakening by not feeding or rocking the baby back to sleep when he or she awakes. Avoid using the word “no” too often, because this will lessen the meaning. Reserve it for situations where the baby is potentially endangered by his or her actions. Immediate discouragement is also important when you see your baby heading toward something with which he or she should not play. Remember to praise good behaviors.

NUTRITION

At 9 months of age, more of your baby’s calories should come from solid foods. Avoid starting cow’s milk until you discuss this with your child’s physician. If you have not introduced junior or table foods yet, this represents a good time to do so. It will increase both the texture and variety of foods in your baby’s diet. Table foods should be soft, mashed or finely chopped. Avoid small hard foods such as peanuts, raisins or whole beans, since your baby may choke on them. As your baby’s coordination improves, he or she may begin to feed

him or herself. Finger foods, such as well-cooked pasta and cereals are enjoyable for most infants. Give your child a baby spoon with which to play. You can help your child begin to feed him or herself. Only introduce one new food every three to five days.

BOTTLE WEANING

Ideally, you should wean your baby from the bottle by 1 year of age. Drinking from a cup should be introduced by this time, too. A trainer cup with a snap lid is best for this. At first, help your baby to maneuver the cup to the mouth and tip it so he or she can drink. Do not be surprised if your baby treats the cup as a toy at first. Until he or she stops playing with the cup, just put water in the cup to minimize the mess.

IMMUNIZATIONS

Your child may be receiving immunizations at the 9-month visit. Discuss with your physician which immunizations your child should receive and the potential side effects. To help with the possibility of some of the side effects, Tylenol® (acetaminophen) may be given every four to six hours over the next 24 to 48 hours. If you have any questions about your child's reaction to the vaccine, please talk with your health care provider.

SAFETY

At this age, your baby is more mobile and new dangers exist. Your infant may now be able to climb. Do not leave your baby unattended in rooms where he or she can climb on furniture. A playpen may be useful for short periods of time.

- Gate the bottom and top of stairways so your baby does not have access to stairs
- Never leave pots or heavy objects near the edge of tables
- Cook on back burners when possible, and turn pots so that the handles point to the back of the stove
- Do not carry hot foods or liquids near your baby
- Keep surfaces such as coffee tables and sofas clear of small objects that may cause your baby to choke
- Take precautions to prevent accidental ingestion
- Keep the poison control center number 314-772-5200 or 1-800-366-8888 near your phone
- Keep one bottle of syrup of ipecac per child in the home. Always call the poison control or your physician before giving syrup of ipecac.

ILLNESS

Call your doctor if your child develops extreme irritability, lethargy, breathing difficulties or fever. Minor illnesses, such as colds can be treated without a visit to the doctor; however, you may call with questions or concerns.