

# 6 month visit

## REMEMBER...

**At this age, babies enjoy toys and games** that involve pushing, shaking and squeezing.

**Sleeping area** should be clear of blankets and other soft items like bumpers, stuffed animals, toys and pillows.

**Have a regular day and night time sleep schedule for your baby.**

**Remember ABC's of sleep:**  
Baby sleeps  
A - Alone  
B - on their Back  
C - in the Crib



## Be Active

**Limit time in swings, playpens and infant seats** to allow your baby to move as much as possible.

Encourage your baby to move by putting toys just out of reach.

Encourage active play with floor activity gyms, mirrors and toys.

Play games like peek-a-boo, so big and patty cake.

**Your baby will start sitting up between 4 and 7 months.** You can prop them up with pillows at first. As they get stronger, they will be able to sit on their own.

**Your baby may be rolling over and scooting as your baby gets ready to start crawling.** As your baby becomes more mobile, it is important to childproof your home.

**Avoid choking hazards:** Remember that objects or toys that fit inside a toilet paper roll should be kept out of baby's reach.

**Do not allow a television in your baby's bedroom.** Screen time (TV, computer, cell phone and electronic games) is not recommended under age 2.

**Exercise with your baby.** Do some floor exercises with your baby.

Include your baby on family bike rides and family walks.



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## Eating Well

**If you are still breastfeeding,** keep up the great work! Continue breastmilk or iron fortified formula for the first year. As the amount of foods they eat increases the amount of breastmilk or formula decreases.

**Introducing baby food:** When your baby can sit up well with support, hold their head up well, does not automatically push foods out of their mouth with their tongue, has coordinated swallowing and appears interested in foods it is time to start baby food.



**Combination baby foods should be avoided;** for example mixed vegetable and beef or chicken, rice and vegetable, they have less nutritional value than the single ingredient foods.

**Slowly introduce solid finger foods** such as whole grain crackers, no sugar added cereals and toast.

## REMEMBER...

**For breastfeeding help,** a lactation consultant and support groups are available.

**Trust your baby to know how much food is enough.** Some days they will eat more than others.



**Puree the healthy foods** the family is eating for the baby including lean meats, fruits and vegetables. For example; avocado, banana, sweet potato, carrots, squash, zucchini, peas, apples, pears, nectarines, peaches, green beans, chicken, eggs\*, peanut butter\* mixed in infant cereal, whole grain bread and whole grain pasta.

**Feeding is not just transporting nutrients into your baby,** it is an act of love and a way to connect.

**Never put your baby to bed with a bottle or prop the bottle** due to risk of choking, tooth decay and ear infections.

**If a parent or sibling has a history of food allergies** ask your pediatrician when you should introduce eggs, shellfish, fish, peanuts, soy, milk, wheat and tree nuts.

## General guidelines for this age:

### BREASTFEED ON DEMAND AT THIS AGE.

Breastfed babies generally feed 4-6 times a day.

Formula fed babies: 6-8 oz per feeding, 3-5 times a day.

## Sleep

**Babies sleep 9-12 hours at night.**

**Babies often nap one to four times a day for 45 minutes to 2 hours.**

**By 6 months and 13 pounds, night time feedings are not necessary.**

Your baby should be able to sleep through the night.

**Encourage your baby to self-soothe and fall asleep on their own.**

A bedtime routine can help your baby get ready for sleep. This may include bathing, singing or reading.

**Do not include television in your baby's night time routine.**

**Keep your baby in a smoke free environment.**



**Now is a great time to practice with sippy cups.**

By age one your baby should be weaned from a bottle to a cup. Offer water at least twice daily in a sippy cup.

**Meal times are family times;** it may be messy but enjoy this time together as a family. Place your baby in a high chair with safety belt at the table.



## Eating Well CONTINUED

**Always use a spoon and a bowl, do not feed from the jar or pouch.**

Bacteria from the baby's mouth can grow in the jar or pouch and cause food-borne illness.

**Offer the same food multiple times.**

It is normal for babies to spit out food. It may take 10-15 tries before an infant accepts a new food.

**Babies are easily distracted;** provide a calm meal time environment with television and electronic devices off.

**Your baby does not need salt, butter, margarine or sugar added to their food.**

**Only breastmilk and formula should be given in the bottle.** Do not put cereal, juice, or other beverages in the bottle.

**Your baby does not need juice. Juice increases the risk of obesity and tooth decay.**



### Sample Meal Pattern

*Gradually work up to by 8 months.*

- Provide a sippy cup of water at each meal time.
- Provide **1-2 Tablespoons** of each food item listed.

**WAKE UP:** Breastmilk or Formula

**BREAKFAST:** Grain and Fruit

**MIDMORNING SNACK:** Breastmilk or Formula

**LUNCH:** Protein, Vegetable and Fruit

**MIDAFTERNOON SNACK:** Breastmilk or Formula

**DINNER:** Protein, Vegetable and Grain

**BEDTIME SNACK:** Breastmilk or Formula

### Avoid

- Sugar sweetened beverages like soft drinks, punch, juice or Kool-aid.
- Bacon, hot dogs, baloney, sausage, fast food, fried foods, French fries.
- Cookies, candy, cakes, chips.
- Popcorn, whole grapes, whole nuts (Choking hazard: cut grapes, crush nuts until age 4).
- Honey until age 1.

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## Homemade Baby Food

**Start with some of the healthy foods you eat and puree or mash for your baby:**

Banana

Avocado

Sweet potatoes

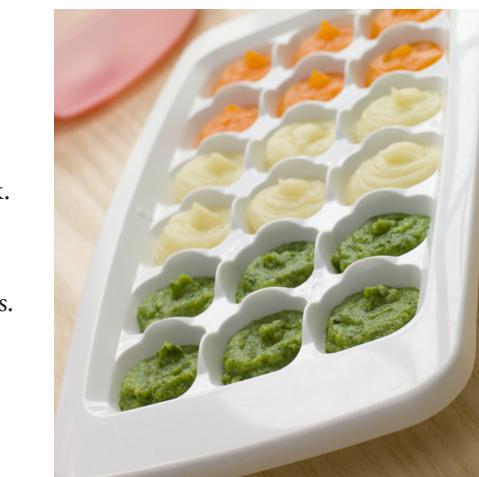
Squash

Lean meats



### Avocado

1. Peel and take out the pit of a ripe avocado, do not cook.
2. Cut "meat" out and mash with a fork.
3. There should be no need for a food processor, ripe avocados have a very soft consistency and texture, just like bananas.



### Squash

*Medium sized butternut or acorn squash*

1. Cut squash in half, scoop out seeds.
2. Place an inch of water in a baking pan, then place squash halves "face" down in the pan, check on water level while baking.
3. Bake 400 degrees for 40 minutes or until halves feel soft, then scoop squash "meat" out of the shell.
4. Place squash "meat" into your choice of appliance (food mill or food processor) and puree.
5. Add water as necessary to achieve a smooth consistency.



### To Freeze

Pour cooked food into clean ice cube tray, cover with plastic wrap or foil and put in freezer.

Once frozen, remove form tray and place into a freezer bag or covered container, label and date.

Thaw food overnight in the refrigerator covered or in the microwave; stir food and check for hot spots. Do not thaw on counter bacteria can grow.

Meat should be reheated to 165 degrees fahrenheit then allow to cool before feeding. Throw away leftovers, do not re-freeze. Use refrigerated/thawed food within two days.

### SAFETY TIPS:

- Wash bowls, utensils, food processor and counters.
- Wash food.
- Take special care with foods grown close to the ground.
- Wait until 6 months of age for beets, spinach, turnips, carrots, or collard greens.
- **Cover, freeze or refrigerate immediately.**

