

Additional Information

Today's Date: _____

Baby's Height: _____

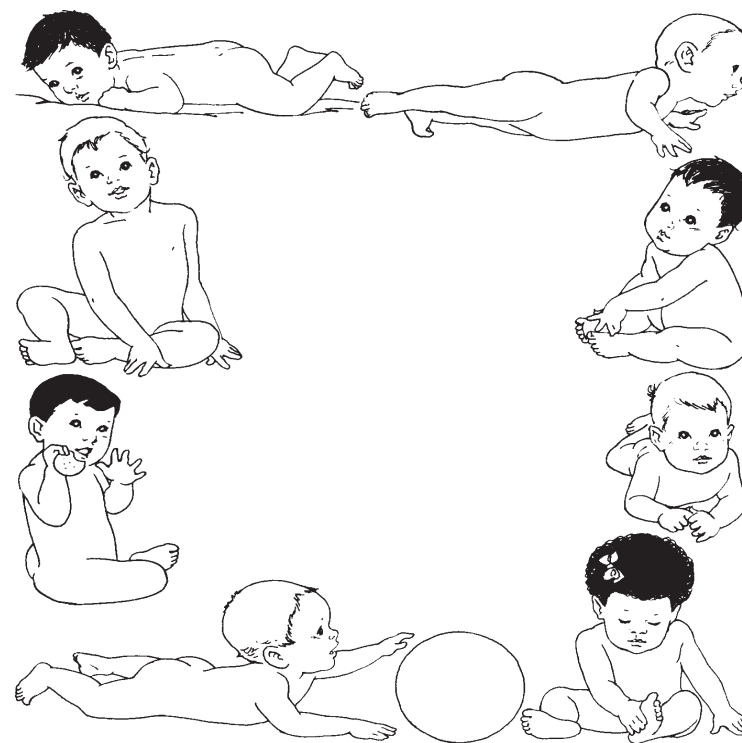
Baby's Weight: _____

Baby's Head Circumference: _____

Special Instructions: _____

Next Appointment: _____

Kent County Wants Healthy Babies



Your Six - Seven Month Old



Kent County Health Department
Maternal Infant Health Program
700 Fuller Ave., NE
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503
616/632-7100
www.accesskent.com

Revised8/08

Kent County Health Department
Maternal Infant Health Program
Childhood Education Series

How Your Baby is Growing

Head - your baby has a strong neck. His head does not sag when he is pulled to a sitting position.

Eyes - your baby may look for a dropped object. He turns in the direction of a noise. He tries to find out where the noise comes from. He may begin to watch faces and then try to copy them.

Ears - your baby's listening skills are continuing to develop. He will be interested in crinkly paper or blocks that can be banged together. A wide awake and content baby should turn his eyes and head in the direction of your voice.

Mouth/Speech - your baby will make sounds like "ga- ga", "ba-ba", "ma-ma" and "da-da". This is called "babble". He may even make sounds like he is talking. You may observe him practicing his sounds and suddenly let out a squeal, scaring himself enough to cry. Remember he isn't quite sure where all the noise is coming from. He's just starting to realize he is the noise maker.

Teeth - some babies will get their first tooth around this time. As teeth come through, he may feel some soreness and be irritable.

Large Muscle Development - your baby may sit without support for a few seconds. He may put weight on his legs when you hold him up in a standing position. He may get into a crawling position or he may scoot on his tummy across the floor. He may scoot going forward or backward. Some babies roll over and over to get where they want to go. He will begin to reach for toys.

Small Muscle Development - your baby's grasp is now fast and accurate. He may be able to accept two small toys at a time. Soon he may even begin to "transfer" a toy from one hand to the other as he reaches for a new toy.

Topic of the Month Routines

Babies are learning about themselves and their surroundings. Routines help them to feel secure. Doing the same sort of things at about the same time of day, or in the same order, makes your baby feel comfortable.

Routines are a baby's way of knowing what's happening next. Babies like to have a routine for waking, sleeping, eating, bathing, spending time with Mom or Dad, and spending time alone. When their routines are changed, they may become cranky and fussy. Some routines you may want to think about are:

Feeding

Routines for feeding include the times for meals and what is given. For example, in the morning give cereal and fruit, a vegetable and fruit at lunch time, and at dinner cereal and vegetables. Continue to give him breast milk or formula.

Naps and Bedtime

You may want to put your baby to bed at about the same time every day and use the same bedtime routines. You may bathe him first, read or sing to him, or rock or cuddle him.

Play

Set aside specific times for play. There may be a time for play with your baby and a time for playing alone. He will want to play his favorite games over and over.

You will make some routines with your baby. Others he will make on his own. Be aware of what these routines are and know that if you change them, he may become upset.

- Imitate the sounds your baby makes to you. Speaking back to him lets him know that he is important.
- Focus on and repeat single words that have meaning to your baby. Say, “Here is your cup”. Then repeat the word “cup”.
- Play music and sing songs. Television is never a substitute for you. The most important sound to your baby is your voice.
- Praise your baby often by cheering and clapping. Give him a big smile and hug when he tries something new. The more you praise him, the more he will want to please you.

Social Skills

- Encourage your baby to enjoy people by bringing him to the store, to church, or to the home of friends. If he’s afraid, hold him and talk quietly to him to reassure him that you are there.

Sleep Patterns



Your baby may be sleeping about 10 hours at night and about four hours during the day.

Some babies around six months of age, who have been sleeping through the night, will begin to wake up again at night. This is about the time he starts experiencing “separation anxiety”. He doesn’t understand that the separation is not forever.

If your baby cries when you leave the room or wakes up at night, give him at least five minutes to fall asleep by himself. If the crying doesn’t stop, let him know you are there by talking softly to him and gently rubbing his tummy or leg. Avoid picking him up unless there is a specific reason such as his diaper needs changing.

Bedtime routines, cuddling during the day, and avoiding active play before bedtime may help to make him feel more secure and soothed.

Social and Emotional Development - Babies have good and bad days just like adults. There may be times when he is cranky, restless, and tense. Some reasons for fussiness and crying are teething, upset stomach, uncertainty, sharp noises and fear of caretaker leaving.

Feeding Your Baby

By now most babies are ready for solid food. Begin by feeding him plain, dry infant rice or barley cereal mixed with formula or breast milk two times a day. Use a spoon to feed it to him. Once he has mastered cereal, you can offer him strained, pureed vegetables, then fruits. Do not feed him directly from the jar.

When you start a new food, feed it to your baby for three to five days. Use only single ingredient foods. Watch him for allergic reactions. Signs of a reaction might be:

- rashes
- stool changes (constipation or loose stools)
- vomiting



Foods that may cause a severe allergic reaction should be avoided at this time. These foods include eggs and nut products.

Foods that are easy to choke on should also be avoided. These foods include nuts, popcorn, chunks of meat, hot dogs, peanut butter, grapes, and raw vegetables.

Babies are messy eaters. He will spit, smear, drop and squeeze his food as he is learning. It is a good idea to have a vinyl mat or sheet under the high chair.

Breast milk and formula are still important for your baby. You may notice him trying to grab the bottle. It is still important for you to hold him during the feeding and to interact by talking, singing or rocking.

Your Baby's Safety

Always know where your baby is and what he is doing!

Never put your baby in a walker. They are unsafe. Babies in a walker can move three feet per second. This is faster than you can react.

Use approved safety gates to keep your baby out of dangerous areas. Use the safety straps that come with a stroller, baby chair, or shopping cart.

Never put anything around your baby's neck (small toy, pacifier or necklace).

Your baby is becoming more active now. Do not leave him alone on a couch, changing table or bed. Never leave him alone in his crib with the side rails down.

Keep a watchful eye on your baby when other children are around. Never leave him alone with a pet.

Never leave your baby alone in a bath or near water. He can drown quickly in just a few inches of water.

Now is the time to take down the mobile over your baby's crib. At this age, he could pull it down by himself.

Now is the time to remove bumper pads if they were used. He is going to be moving around more.

Your baby should continue to be placed in a rear facing car seat. The safest place for him is in the middle of the back seat. The car seat must be held tightly by the seat belt for it to be safe. Check the height and weight limits for your car seat.

Be aware of sources of lead poisoning. Your baby is starting to move around more and putting his hands in his mouth. Talk to your nurse about sources of lead.

Have emergency phone numbers by the phone including the Poison Control Center (1-800-222-1222).

Have an escape plan in case of fire.

Interacting with Your Baby

Your baby is now ready to play. Here are some activities you can do together to have fun and help him develop.

Muscle Development

- Stand your baby on your lap and let him bounce. Let him pull himself to a standing position by holding on to your fingers.
- Let him practice sitting alone, propped between your legs, while he plays with a few toys you have placed in front of him.
- Give him toys he can pass from one hand to another. Blocks are very good for practicing this skill.
- Let him play with things he can manipulate with his hands. Soft dolls or animals, measuring cups, egg cartons, plastic bottles, or empty boxes are great toys for a baby.
- If he can sit up alone, roll a ball to him.
- Play finger or toe games such as "Pat-a-Cake" and "This Little Piggy".
- As your baby sits in his high chair, place a Cheerio on his tray and encourage him to pick it up. See if he follows it as you push it around his tray.

Sight

- Drop a ball or hide a toy under a blanket. See if he can find it or will look for it. Clap and smile when he finds it. This teaches him that things are still there even when he can't see them. It helps him practice remembering.
- Look in the mirror with him and talk to his image. Say "Hi", wave bye-bye, or blow kisses.
- Look at books together. Point to pictures, label objects, and ask questions. Choose books with bright pictures. Hold your baby close to you, and turn the pages slowly. Let him touch and pat the book.

Hearing

- When you hear sounds, point them out to your baby. "Is that an airplane?" "Did you hear the dog?"
- Click your tongue and listen for him to imitate you. Imitation is a first step in language development.