

Additional Information

Today's Date: _____

Baby's Height: _____

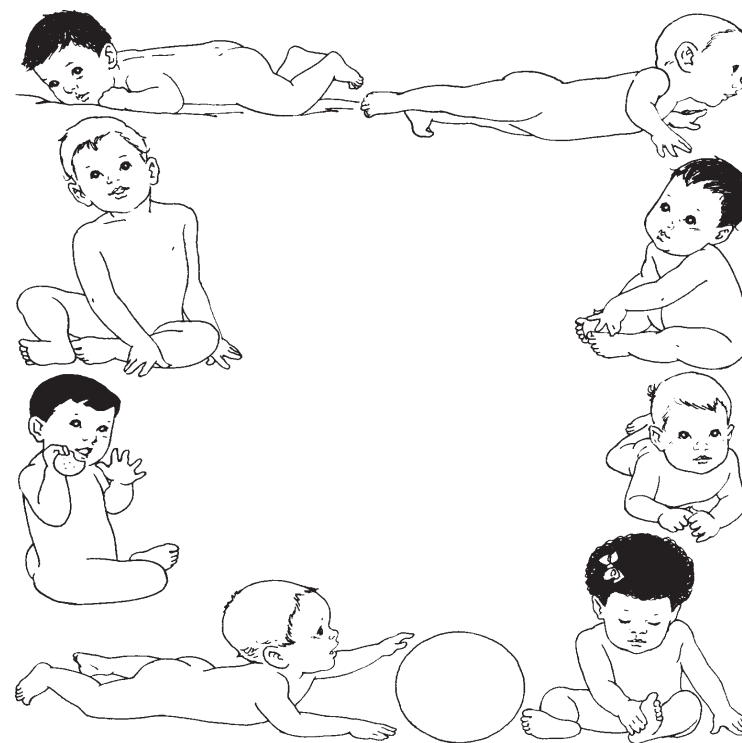
Baby's Weight: _____

Baby's Head Circumference: _____

Special Instructions: _____

Next Appointment: _____

Kent County Wants Healthy Babies



Your Eight - Nine Month Old



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Maternal Infant Health Program
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Kent County Health Department
Maternal Infant Health Program
Childhood Education Series

How Your Baby is Growing

Head - muscle control starts at the top of the body and moves down. Your baby's head, neck, shoulders, arms and hands work better than her legs and feet.

Eyes - your baby will look for you when you talk. She will like to look at bright colors in her toys, room and clothing and especially at things that move. She will like to have her scenery changed often.

Ears - your baby will listen to music and toys that make noise. She is beginning to understand what is being said and listens when you talk.

Speech - your baby changes the sounds she makes to copy what she hears. You may notice her making noises anytime she is awake. Some noises are merely squeals, others are her own "words", and others you will recognize like "ma-ma" and "da-da". She may even try to copy you by saying "ba" when you pick up a ball and say "ball".

Large Muscle Development - by eight months your baby may be sitting alone. She may still fall over when she moves or turns her head. She may rock on her hands and knees. Many babies crawl quickly and with lots of skill while others take more time learning to crawl. Each baby is unique and has her own timetable. Your baby's developing curiosity will cause her to examine, explore and make new discoveries. By nine months, she may change positions without falling. She may pull herself up to furniture. She waves bye-bye and claps her hands.

Social and Emotional Development - your baby will respond to play by what mood she is in. She will have loud and expressive moods or quiet and passive moods. You may notice her begin to imitate "eye-hand" actions that you do like clapping her hands or patting the high chair.

Growth - your baby's growth is slowing down now. She will gain about a 1/2 pound a month. She will grow three or four more inches by one year.

Topic of the Month Discipline

As your baby becomes more mobile and curious, she'll naturally become more assertive as well. She'll want to touch, taste, and handle everything she can get into her hands. This curiosity is important to her development and should be encouraged.

However, when she wants to do something that's dangerous or disrupts the rest of the family, you need to take charge. She's not old enough to misbehave on purpose and won't understand if you punish her.

The main goal of discipline is to teach limits. If you discover her doing something wrong, let her know it's wrong by saying "no", stopping her and redirecting her attention.

Your baby will learn what is wrong and what is right if you are consistent with what you teach. She will try to test you. This is all part of her learning process.

Prevent situations where she might get into trouble. Put the wastebasket under the sink or the plant on a shelf she can't reach. This works better than having to say "no" all the time.

Reward your baby with attention when she's playing nicely, instead of only when she's doing something wrong. Your attention is what she desires most. Use it to encourage good behavior.



- Point to your eyes, nose, mouth, or fingers and name each body part. Soon she will start to point to them too.

- Talk with your baby on the telephone or pretend with a toy phone.

Muscle Skills

- Help her put things in and out of containers.

- Let your baby bang on pots and pans. Give her two objects like small blocks to bang together. Watch her practice passing an object from one hand to another. Clap when she does something new and she will repeat it. Babies love an audience.



Sleep Patterns

Continue with your established bedtime routines such as singing, reading, cuddling, rocking, or bathing. Your baby may make a game out of getting you back to her room by calling you or crying.

Don't use the bottle or breast as a pacifier. It may be tempting to feed her to get her back to sleep. This will only teach her to wake up at night.

Try to give your baby 15 minutes to fall back to sleep. If the crying doesn't stop, let her know you are there by talking softly to her and gently rubbing her tummy or leg. Avoid picking her up unless there is a specific reason such as her diaper needs changing.

She will continue to sleep about 10 hours at night and about four hours during the day.



Feeding Your Baby

After your baby has been eating fruits and vegetables, you can feed her strained meats and mashed beans. At this time it is okay to try yogurt and cottage cheese. Continue to give only one new food every three days.

Soon your baby will also be able to eat finger foods. Finger foods are foods that are easily broken up in a baby's mouth. Examples are:

- Cheerios
- toast squares
- crackers
- small pieces of cooked vegetables and soft fruits

Finger foods are important. Not only do they prepare her to chew foods, they also help her develop hand-eye coordination as she learns to pick up the pieces of food and put them in her mouth.

As your baby learns to chew, it is time to introduce new textures in her diet. She no longer needs her food pureed; now she can handle soft pieces of food that are chopped or cut up. It is okay to give her foods that you make for other family members as long as they are soft and small. Limit the amount of food on her tray at one time. Do not chew your baby's food.

Foods that may cause choking should be avoided. These foods include:

- nuts
- grapes
- chunks of meat
- popcorn
- hot dogs
- raw vegetables
- raisins
- peanut butter

Foods that may cause a severe allergic reaction should be avoided at this time. These foods include egg whites, chocolate, peanuts, and nut products.

Breast milk and formula are still important for your baby. As she increases the food she eats, she may cut back her formula intake but still needs at least 24 ounces a day.

Your Baby's Safety

Always know where your baby is and what she 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.

Baby proof your home by:

- Putting covers on electrical outlets.
- Keeping cleaning supplies out of her reach.
- Keeping the toilet lid down.
- Moving electric cords and extension cords out of her reach.
- Cushioning sharp corners on furniture where she plays.
- Making sure furniture and the television will not fall over on her if she tries to pull herself up on it.
- Putting small objects out of reach.



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

Check the water temperature before putting your baby in the bathtub. Never leave her alone in a bath or near water. She can drown quickly in just a few inches of water.

Your baby should continue to be placed in a rear facing car seat. The safest place for her 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 her hands in her 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

Feed your baby's mind! **You are her most important teacher** and play is the way she learns. Play with her a lot. Play shows her that you love her. It builds confidence and trust.

Some favorite games you can play with your baby are:

- "Pat-a-Cake"
- "Peek-a-Boo"
- "Itsy Bitsy Spider"

Use your fingers to pretend you are climbing a spider web and sing: "Itsy bitsy spider went up the waterspout. Down came the rain and washed the spider out. Out came the sun and dried up all the rain and the itsy bitsy spider went out the spout again"

- "This Little Piggy"
- "So Big"
- "Pop Goes the Weasel"

Turn slowly in a circle while holding your baby and sing "All around the mulberry bush, the monkey chased the weasel. The monkey thought it was all in fun....then Pop goes the weasel!" Bounce her with the "Pop". When she's familiar with the game she'll bounce herself.

- Roll a ball to her and let her try to roll it back to you.
- Play hide and seek by hiding her favorite toy under a blanket and letting her find it. Say "Where's the Teddy?" and then clap when she finds it.

Listening, Hearing, Language

- Point out sounds your baby hears - a knock at the door, a footstep, or a whistle - and label the sound or say, "What's that?"

- Your voice is your baby's favorite sound. Talk to her, sing to her, and whisper in her ear. She is learning to listen with each sound you point out.

- Read to your baby every day. Go to the library and get books with bright pictures, that rhyme, or make noise. Point to a picture and talk about it. Ask her to find the dog and then point to it. Hold her close while you read and she will feel loved.