

# Well Check: 6 months

Most babies have doubled their birth weight by this time and enjoy new tricks like recognizing faces and rolling over as well as putting things in their mouths. Be sure to keep small objects out of reach.

## Feeding your baby

- **Wait until your baby is at least 12 months old before giving cow's milk.** Keep feeding with breast milk or formula.
- **Your baby doesn't need juice.** You can give them water instead.
- **If you're still breastfeeding, keep it up as long as you and your baby like.** Keep taking your prenatal vitamins and giving your baby vitamin D drops.
- **Start feeding solid foods as soon as your baby is ready.**
  - Signs your baby is ready for solid foods include being interested in the foods you eat, opening mouth for the spoon, and being able to sit up with support.
  - Start new foods one at a time. Start with iron-fortified cereal, then give fruits and vegetables. Wait until your baby is 12 months old before giving honey.
  - Offer 1 to 2 tablespoons of solid food, 2 to 3 times a day. To prevent choking, only give very soft, small bites.
  - It's fine if your baby doesn't want to eat or finish certain foods. If your baby doesn't like a new food, they may change their mind in a few days.
  - If you haven't already started feeding your baby allergenic foods like peanut, egg, and milk, now is the time to start frequently feeding those foods to help prevent food allergies.



At 6 months old, most babies can:

- Stand on their legs when holding your hands and may bounce
- Try to get to toys that are out of reach and bring things to their mouth.
- Know familiar faces, like to play with their parents, and like to look at themselves in a mirror
- Babble with vowel sounds and begin to say consonant sounds such as “m” and “b” (Get ready for “mama”!)

Babies reach milestones at their own pace. For detailed information about milestones, visit [cdc.gov/actearly](https://www.cdc.gov/actearly), or call 1-800-CDC-INFO.

## Keeping your baby safe and well

- **Make sure your baby gets recommended immunizations on schedule.**
- **Never shake your baby.** If you feel overwhelmed, put your baby in a safe place and call for help.

- **Start building healthy teeth habits.**
  - If your baby has teeth, clean them with a soft cloth or toothbrush and water.
  - Talk with your doctor about fluoride.
  - Have regular feeding times. Avoid giving your baby a bottle in bed.
- **Be safe in your home and other places.**
  - Protect your baby from poisoning. Lock up medicines and cleaning supplies. When in the kitchen, put your baby in a high chair or playpen.
  - If using a playpen, make sure the weave of the fabric is less than ¼ inch. In the crib, lower the mattress all the way.
  - To prevent falls, always stay with your baby when they are on a high surface such as the bed, couch, or changing table. Put a gate in front of the stairs.
  - Cover electric outlets with plastic plugs.
  - Never leave your baby alone near water or in the bath, not even if you are using a bath seat. Always empty play pools after use. Prevent burns by keeping the water heater below 120°F.

### My follow-up appointment

Your next well-child visit will be when your baby is 9 months old.

Date / Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Here are some helpful resources in the meantime:

- **IntermountainMoms** Facebook page
- For more age-appropriate safety information, visit [safekids.org](https://www.safekids.org) and sign up for the monthly newsletter.
- If you need help with housing, food, or if you feel unsafe at home, call 2-1-1, or visit [211ut.org](https://www.211ut.org) for community services.

- **Be safe in the car.**
  - Keep your baby in a rear-facing car seat in the middle back seat until your child is 2 years old. Never put your baby's car seat in a seat with an air bag.
  - **Don't drive distracted.** Never drink, use drugs, text, or use the phone while driving. If your baby distracts you, pull over.
  - **Never leave your baby alone in a car.**

### Helping your child grow

- **Make plenty of time for active play.**
  - Play turn-taking games with your baby. Copy the sounds and faces they make. Play games like "peek-a-boo," "pat-a-cake," and "so big."
  - Let your baby sit up on the floor and look around. Let your baby sit in front of a mirror.
  - Give your baby bright-colored toys that are safe to put in their mouth, such as rattles, squeaky toys, teething rings, and bath toys.
  - Read to your baby, look at picture books together, and give your baby small board books to hold.
- **Help your baby learn good sleep habits.**
  - Try to have your baby sleep and nap on a regular schedule. Your baby should get 12 to 16 hours of sleep (including naps) each day. Have your baby sleep in a crib in their own room.
  - Help your baby learn to fall asleep on their own. Lay your baby down when sleepy but still awake.
  - If your baby wakes in the night, check on them and try to soothe them without picking them up.

### When should I call?

If you think your baby may have eaten poisons, medicines, or cleaning supplies, call Poison Control immediately at 1-800-222-1222.

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