

# Well Check: 12 months

Congratulations on your baby's first birthday! Your baby may be ready to grab anything in reach, and then drop it, bang it, or put it in their mouth. Make sure your baby is safe. Then, enjoy watching them experiment with how the world works.

## Feeding your baby

- **You can start to give your baby cow's milk.** Give your baby whole milk (4% fat). You can still breastfeed for as long as you and your baby like.
- **Help your baby learn to feed on their own and to use a cup.** Expect that you'll be doing extra cleanup while they're learning.
- **Have your baby eat during mealtime with the family.**
- **Give your baby 3 meals a day and 2 or 3 snacks in between.**
- **Start feeding more table foods.**
  - Offer only healthy foods. Avoid giving junk food or foods with much added sugar.
  - Let your baby decide how much to eat and when to stop eating.
  - Your baby may refuse a food many times before being willing to try it. Don't force them to eat a certain food, but do try it again in a few days.
  - Avoid foods your baby could choke on, such as popcorn, nuts, hot dogs, grapes, and raw vegetables.
- **If you're concerned about your child's weight or eating habits, ask your doctor for advice.**



At 12 months old, most babies:

- Stand alone and walk with one hand held
- Explore things by shaking, throwing, banging, and putting them in and out of a container
- Point to a picture or thing when it's named
- Use simple gestures, like shaking head "no," and simple words like "mama," "dada," and "uh-oh!"
- Follow simple commands ("pick up the toy")
- Cry when you leave and are nervous with strangers

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.**
- **Take care of your baby's new teeth.**
  - Take your baby for a checkup with the dentist.
  - Brush their teeth with a soft brush and water.
  - If your baby uses a bottle, put only water in it.

- **Be safe at home and other places.**

- To prevent choking, be extra careful about buttons, plastic bags, toys with small parts, and other hazards.
- Lock up cleaning supplies and other dangerous chemicals. When in the kitchen, put your baby in a high chair or playpen.
- Put gates at the top and bottom of the stairs.
- Cover electric outlets with plastic plugs, and keep electric cords out of reach.
- Never leave your baby alone near water or in the bath, not even for a second. Always empty play pools, buckets, and tubs after use.

- **Be safe in the car.**

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

### **My follow-up appointment**

Your next well-child visit will be when your child is 15 months old.

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

Here are some helpful resources in the meantime:

- 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.

## **Helping your child grow**

- **Help your baby communicate.**

- Talk, sing, and read to your baby every day.
- If your baby is getting into trouble, gently direct them to another activity instead of scolding.
- Try to talk more about what you do want your baby to do (“put food in your mouth”), instead of what you don’t want them to do (“stop throwing food on the floor.”)
- For the next few months, your baby may cry when you leave, and be afraid of other people, even grandma. When approaching other people, let your baby make the first move.

- **Make plenty of time for active play.**

- Avoid TV and other screens. Let your baby play with stacking toys, blocks, and balls.
- Play turn-taking games with your baby. Make funny noises or funny faces, and let your baby make them back. Pass a toy back and forth.
- 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.**

- Create a calming bedtime routine.
- Lay your baby down when sleepy but still awake.
- Most babies this age need 12 to 16 hours of sleep a day (including 2 naps).
- If your baby wakes in the night, check on and try to calm them without picking them up.

### **Where can I learn more?**

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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