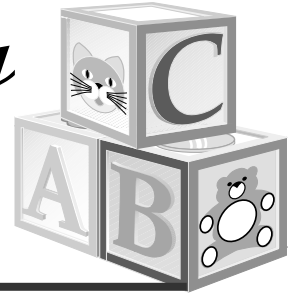


# You and Your Baby

## Months 7 & 8



### Baby's Health & Safety

Baby depends on you for her safety! Developing safe habits now will protect your child while she is too young to learn about danger:

- Keep the bathroom doors closed, and get rid of your large mop buckets. Babies can drown in a toilet or mop bucket.
- Remember to use safety gates on stairs, and keep those electric outlets covered.
- Keep auto and cleaning supplies, chemicals, and medicines out of reach or locked up.



It is also time to examine your child safety seat for wear and tear and to make sure it still fits! Baby's neck still needs the support of a rear-facing child safety seat, so don't graduate to a booster seat until she is older and weighs at least 40 pounds. More on child safety seats:

- You should be able to see a sticker on the back of the seat that gives the date of manufacture. If there is no sticker, have it checked by an expert, or don't use the seat.
- There are several different styles to choose from. Refer to the instructions that come with the seat, even if you think you know how to use it. If you have a newer vehicle, refer to the owner's manual on using the safety seats and seat belts. Airbags are dangerous for baby!
- Three basic types of seats are widely available: infant, convertible, and booster.
  - **Infant seats** are for babies from birth up to one year of age and 20 lbs.
  - **Convertible seats** can be used with infants and also with toddlers up to four years of age and 40 lbs.
  - **Booster seats** are appropriate for children more than 40 lbs. and may be used until the vehicle safety belts fit the child properly.

- The safest place for your baby to ride in a car is in the center position of the back seat.
- Your child must never ride in the cargo area of a station wagon, utility vehicle, or truck.

For more information on selecting and using child safety seats, check with your health department, county Extension Service office, or NHTSA Auto Safety Hotline 1-800-424-9393, American Academy of Pediatrics 1-800-433-9016 or US Consumer Product Safety Commission 1-800-638-2772.

### Family Focus

#### Stress Management Tips

*If you are feeling overwhelmed as a new parent,*

- Try to talk out your feelings calmly and patiently.
- Take 10. Stop, breathe, count to 10.
- Ask a friend or relative to stay with the baby while you take a break.
- Ask for HELP when you need it.
- Recognize things that cause you stress, such as the following:
  - Too little time
  - Too many decisions
  - Housework
  - Phone calls
  - Family interference
- Use your time wisely

### Baby's Development

#### Physical

*Your baby:*

- Crawls backward and forward on stomach.

- Pulls up by holding onto furniture. Has difficulty getting back down.
- Stands up if leaning against something.
- Sits for several minutes without any support.
- Grabs for things and can hold them with thumb and fist and second fingers.
- Likes to grab, shake, and bang objects and put them in her mouth
- Holds onto a toy, such as a rattle, for several minutes.
- Picks up small things such as pieces of string.
- Feeds herself fingerfood.
- Keeps her diaper drier for a longer period of time.

Your baby must learn to trust herself and her own body before she learns to crawl or stand. Many babies will begin to creep during month eight, and some will crawl. A few active babies may even learn to stand.

Most babies will begin experimenting with standing, so here is what to expect: Starting in a seated position, most babies will draw their knees in toward their chests and pull on a crib side or chair into a squatting-type position. They will be unsteady at this point, not quite standing or sitting. Most babies will eventually try pulling up by moving one hand over the other until they are standing at full height. This will take awhile.

After standing has been accomplished, a baby must learn to sit down! This may take several weeks, and you can expect many banged heads and bottoms. You can help give your child the idea of sitting by moving her body into a sitting position as she would need to do herself.



- Other physical developments to expect:
- Appears to dance when held in standing position. This is the first stepping reaction.
- Can get into a sitting position alone and sit without support.
- Has pincher grasp (thumb and forefinger.)

## Social/Emotional

### Your baby:

- Lets you know when happy, sad, or scared by the sounds.
- Is still afraid of new experiences and new people - likes for you to stay close by.
- Gets upset when parents leave, even if it's for a short time—feels relieved when you return.
- Is upset when people make a lot of fuss.
- Gets frustrated or loses her temper when she can't find something.
- Still babbles a lot and shouts to get attention.
- Likes to pat and kiss her reflection in the mirror.
- Loves to imitate people she knows.
- Wants to be included with family activities.
- Is excited to see pictures of other babies.

## Mental

### Your baby:

- Is curious and wants to explore everything.
- Knows how to solve simple problems, such as making a toy bell ring.
- Understands the meaning of “in” and “out.”

- Remembers events that just happened.
- Says two-syllable sounds such as choo-choo, da-da, and ma-ma.
- Recognizes some words.
- Watches and tries to imitate parents' mouth movements.
- Turns and listens when she hears familiar sounds such as telephone or her name.

## Baby's Food

Now that your baby is 7 or 8 months old and may have some teeth, you can fork-mash vegetables and fruits, in addition to straining or pureeing them.

Mash a favorite vegetable thoroughly with a fork, or use a potato masher for mashing foods such as ripe bananas, cooked apples, winter squash, white or sweet potatoes, or carrots. Make sure the food contains no lumps, pieces of skin, strings, or seeds. The consistency will be a little thicker than pureed food.

Soft-cooked meats are good for your baby, too, but do not give her fried meats or pieces of meat sticks or hot dogs. Trim all fat from the meat and mash thoroughly with a fork.

Cooked foods may be strained through a fine mesh sieve or strainer. A sieve is also useful for steam-cooking small amounts of food for your baby. Be sure all food particles are removed when you wash the strainer.

**Do not feed honey to your baby during her first year. Honey may carry botulism spores that can harm her.**

With the food issue, there are several DO NOT's:

- **DO NOT** use “leftovers” to make baby foods. Leftover foods are likely to have higher levels of bacterial contamination than do freshly prepared foods.
- **DO NOT** feed your baby raw eggs or raw milk. These raw foods may be sources of infections that can be dangerous for her.
- **DO NOT** feed your baby chunky foods such as corn, nuts, popcorn, and seeds, or coarse-textured foods, such as cookies that crumble easily. Such foods are difficult for your baby to eat, and they may make her choke.
- **DO NOT** be afraid to serve foods cold. Most babies will accept cold food. If you want to warm your baby's food, do it just before serving.
- **DO NOT** add salt, sugar, or seasonings to baby foods. Foods that taste bland to an adult are a new-taste experience to an infant. Some sodium is necessary for good health, but there is enough natural sodium in foods. Added salt provides too much sodium for a small baby and can even be harmful.

Remember, with a little patience, you can help your baby appreciate a variety of tastes and textures in new foods.



*This information sheet is one in a series titled You and Your Baby. Contact your county Extension office for more information on you and your baby. Also, the American Academy of Pediatrics provides educational reading material:*

**American Academy of Pediatrics • P.O. Box 747 • Elk Grove Village, IL 60009-0747 OR [www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org)**

[www.ext.msstate.edu](http://www.ext.msstate.edu)

Revised by **Louise E. Davis, Ph.D.**, Extension Child and Family Development Specialist and **Linda S. Patterson, R.N., M.S.N.**, Extension Health Education Specialist. Mississippi State University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability, or veteran status.

**Information Sheet 1377**

Extension Service of Mississippi State University, cooperating with U.S. Department of Agriculture. Published in furtherance of Acts of Congress, May 8 and June 30, 1914. RONALD A. BROWN, Director

(1M-12-00)

