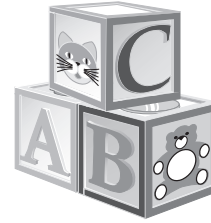


You and Your Baby

Months 11 and 12



Baby's Safety & Health

Standing probably will be your baby's favorite pas-time. Simple walks with a stroller can become a real challenge as your baby stands and reaches out to anyone or anything. Grocery cart rides now can include dangerous maneuvers, so never turn your back as you reach for things on the shelves.

The best exercises for your baby are pulling up, standing, and crawling on his own power.

Be sure you continue using car seats at all times.

Continue visits to your health-care provider. Make sure all vaccinations/shots are up to date. Keep a record because child-care providers and programs may require proof of vaccinations before you can enroll your child.

Family Focus

It is easy to get caught up in day-to-day routines and pressures that may cause you to overlook the need for a special time for you and your baby. Think about setting aside a special time each day—a time when you can give your baby your attention without any interruptions.

The length of time is up to you, depending on your schedule. Even a small amount of time—15 minutes a day—can mean a lot for both of you. It can be a time to enjoy and appreciate one another.

How can you spend this special time? You can sing, read, play, listen to music, cuddle, or just relax and enjoy being together. As your baby gets older, he will eagerly look forward to time for just family.

Baby's Development

Physical

Most babies will stand alone sometime this month, a few will walk, and some will still require support to stand.

Your baby's skills in using her hands are improving. Hand-eye coordination is better. In fact, your baby now can probably fill her spoon and get it into her mouth successfully—at least part of the time! Your baby may—

- squat and stoop well.
- sit in a chair with ease.
- be able to pull off her shoes.
- try to climb out of her playpen or crib.
- be able to throw or roll a ball.
- be able to pick up small objects.

Your baby requires about 12 hours of sleep, but she may resist it.

Your baby is trying to establish her independence. You can help by providing clothes that are easy to put on and pull off.

Social/Emotional

Your baby likes to be around other children but generally is not ready to play cooperatively with them. Make sure there are a variety of toys around to select from when in a group setting. Remember, babies don't understand the word "sharing."

He likes to play with toys that fit inside of each other such as nesting boxes, large pegs and pegboards, and pots and pans.



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Mental

Your baby understands more words and the feelings behind words. Be careful what you say and how you say it. If ugly words are used in your baby's presence, don't be surprised if she repeats them—and in the right situation.

Babies learn to talk from listening to the adults around them. Singing, reading, and talking to your baby promotes her language development.

Babies can usually speak two or three words by their first birthdays. A baby's speech is not clear in the beginning, and this is not something to worry about. Practice makes perfect, so just continue encouraging her to speak, and her speech will become more clear.

In these last 2 months of your baby's first year, playing with sound is a favorite activity. Your baby will copy the sounds you make. "Hi," "ho," and "da da" are all fun to imitate, and that is how your baby will continue to learn new words.

Hearing new sounds is exciting for your baby. Make animal sounds as you read picture books together, and introduce new rhymes and stories.

Your baby loves hearing her name, so use it often.

Simple commands (such as "give" or "hands up") become easy and fun to follow.

Your baby can understand much more than she can say. Use words continuously, and point to objects as you label them. The best way for you to join in this play is to keep talking and listening to your baby.

Discipline

The first time a young child flings himself on the floor (kicking, wailing, and screaming) can frighten a new mother or father into a variety of actions. You definitely should not give in to this behavior.

Just a little encouragement can go a long way in this type of situation, and you can bring the negative behavior under control. Punishing will only confuse and frighten your baby, so another form of guidance is needed.

What should you do? Although it is difficult, ignoring the negative behavior is probably the best solution. Your baby will probably scream louder, kick harder, and then finally, when he realizes you are not reacting to his behavior, calm down and resume his activity. This is certainly a healthy solution to the problem.

Baby's Food

If you have an active baby, you may notice her weight gain slowing down. That's because your baby is using more calories for her constant activity.

As your baby moves around to explore her world, she will discover a new independence. She may be eager to try out this new independence by insisting on feeding herself. Or she may be a little scared by her new abilities and cling to you at mealtimes. She may even refuse to hold her cup or spoon and demand to be fed.

Whether your baby is a clinger or a self-feeder, try to be calm and patient. It will pay off in fewer problems now and later.



*This information sheet is one in a series called **You and Your Baby**. Contact your county Extension office or visit www.childcaremississippi.org for more information on you and your baby. The American Academy of Pediatrics also provides educational reading materials at www.healthychildren.org.*



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