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9 Month Well Visit

Your 9-month child is quite active in both awareness and motor skills. Many children can crawl wherever they want, bear their own weight when holding to furniture and many are pulling to a stand and walking while holding to furniture. If your child is not bearing their own weight by 10 months of age, let me know this. I will ensure their hips have developed appropriately. Many children are non-specifically saying mama and dada and other babbling sounds. By 12 months this mama/dada will become more specific for mom and dad in recognition. By this age all either already have or are now showing preference for well-known caregivers, afraid of people they don't know well. Fine motor skills such as "pincer grasp" when the child uses 1st finger and thumb in opposition to pick up things in distinction to raking with the entire hand to pick up things is in transition. So, because of this mastery of locomotion and use of the hands your child is now able to get into a lot of trouble. Be careful and watch your child carefully for household hazards like stairs, poisons and small objects that older siblings might leave on the floor. Your child explores the world by putting objects in the mouth and so aspiration, where objects can be breathed into the lungs is a terribly frightening risk.

Your child should now be started on table foods including cheese, peanut butter and yogurt. These will need to be soft and small pieces, giving only a few at a time to the child to protect against choking. Please no egg whites, nuts chunks in foods, shellfish and honey as they are a risk. After 1 year these foods may, gradually, be introduced. Your child should be drinking formula or breast milk, still approximately 20-30 ounces daily. More and more of the calories should come from solids now. Approximately 900 calories daily is expected. Allowing the fine motor skills to develop by exposure to "finger foods" is a good idea to aid development.

Your child should be sleeping roughly 15 hours daily with 2 naps. I encourage allowing your child to put themselves to sleep and allowing them to learn to self-soothe through the night to aid all in the family to sleep well.

Teeth eruption is common anytime now and when you see them, begin to clean with a rag or a soft-bristle tooth brush to keep them clean and to teach the child this ritual. Please do not put your child to bed with a bottle and do not feed, either breast or bottle, your child through the night. Rotting of the teeth is a huge health concern for kids and will happen if this practice is allowed. If a feeding is given before bed the teeth should be cleaned prior to sleep. In many cities in Salt Lake fluoride is found in the tap water. If you do not know whether you have fluoride in your water, call your water supplier to find out. Fluoride in the water is adequate to keep teeth healthy but if none is found in your

water your child should be given a fluoride drop prescription to help keep the teeth strong and prevent cavities.

Today, vaccines will be less in number than previously (if you have kept your child current with vaccines) and again if your child is uncomfortable acetaminophen or ibuprofen may be given.

The next well visit is at 12 months of age.

Have fun at this active time with your child. Please call for concerns.

Suzy Holbrook,MD