



## 6 Months Old

### Important Points to Know

**DIET** Solid foods are introduced between 5 and 6 months. It is preferred to start with single grain cereals (such as rice or oatmeal) as they are fortified with iron. Always feed cereal in a bowl with a spoon and not in a bottle. After cereals you may move on to vegetables and meats and finally to fruits. Meats are very hypoallergenic and a good source of zinc and iron which breast milk is low in after 6 months. Continue to nurse your baby or feed her formula during this process.

Only introduce one new food every 3-5 days. This way if your child has a rash or hives you will know exactly what food caused the allergy. We now recommend introducing highly allergenic foods early such as cheese, yogurt, egg, soy, wheat, peanut/tree nuts in the form of butter/paste. For details see the Feeding Tips and Preventing Allergies handout. Remember only breast milk or infant formula (no regular cow or alternative milks) and no honey (risk of botulism) until after 1 year of age!

Breast fed babies need to start their own iron supplement (Such as Poly-Visol with Iron) at 4 months of age until 2 servings of iron-rich solid foods are consumed per day.

**TEETHING** The average age for new teeth is 6-9 months. Once your child has teeth you should begin brushing them twice daily with a tiny amount of fluoridated toothpaste (size of a grain of rice). Poke a pinhole in the foil covering the opening of the toothpaste to prevent accidental consumption.

**SAFETY** It is time to child proof your home! Get on the floor at your baby's level to see your house from his point of view. If your baby ingests a poison call the Poison Control Center at 1-800-222-1222. Post the sticker/magnet given to you in your packet on the refrigerator!

Walkers are not recommended because of the high rate of head injuries, and they do not help your baby learn to walk.

**NIGHT TIME SLEEP** Bedtime should occur at the same time every night. Establish a routine that you do each night to get your baby ready for bed. Part of your routine should include reading. Even if it seems that your baby is more interested in eating the book than looking at it, continue this practice. Studies have shown that reading, talking and singing daily to children under age 3 enhances brain development, vocabulary and eventual school readiness.

**BOOKS & WEBSITES** For additional reference material we recommend: [www.healthychildren.org](http://www.healthychildren.org) [www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org) Caring For Your Baby and Young Child, by the American Academy of Pediatrics Baby 411, by Denise Fields, Ari Brown, M.D. Touchpoints, by T. Berry Brazelton, M.D.