

Stranger Anxiety

What's happening? That outgoing baby who liked everyone now clings to you when strangers approach. A smile from a stranger can cause a frown or a tearful outburst. Even grandparents may be rebuffed!

Almost every baby goes through the stranger anxiety stage, some more than others. The peak of such behavior is usually between 8 and 10 months of age. Though it can be worrisome and embarrassing to parents, it's really an important step in your baby's development.

At this time your baby is learning two very important concepts:

- (1) that he is a separate person, and
- (2) that people and things come and go not because he wants them to, but because they are separate.

With this understanding, the baby's world suddenly becomes more disturbing. Now he must begin to cope with people and situations that seem unpredictable and sometimes frightening. Mom and Dad are anchors of security – but even they aren't always there for reassurance!

By understanding what your baby is experiencing at this stage, you can give him the security he needs. Be patient and supportive. When your baby hesitates or pulls away from people, don't force the issue, and don't scold. When you must leave for brief periods, leave a favorite toy or blanket for comfort. Choose a babysitter your baby knows and likes.

A lot of changes at one time or close together may overwhelm your baby and create problems. Try to avoid grouping things together like a move to a new house, a new babysitter, and a prolonged absence.

Learning occurs through experience and practice. When you leave, the baby is upset; when you return, he is reassured. Each time the pattern repeats, he gains confidence that you will come back. Peek-a-boo and hide-and-seek are important games for 8 to 12-month-old babies. Let your baby watch as you hide a toy under a cloth then help him find it (cheat at first by leaving a part of the toy

exposed). Hide your face behind your hands, then peek. Teach him how to cover his own face, or to hide behind a door while you search.

With each happy "discovery," and your open excitement, your baby gains confidence in himself. As confidence grows, he will gradually grow more comfortable with other people. That cheerful, friendly baby will be back again, older and wiser.



Postpartum Health for Mom

You may be getting frustrated that the weight is not coming off as fast as you'd like. Remember, normal, healthy weight loss is about 1-2 pounds per week. A major benefit of slow weight loss is that it is easier to keep the weight off for a longer period of time compared to quick weight loss that often leads to rapid weight gain. You can speed things up a little bit by exercising longer and more often.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

To get the most out of your exercise routine, create a schedule that works for both you and your baby. Try to include a 30-minute workout at least three times a week and then build up to 60 minutes at least 4-5 days a week. The more calories you burn, the faster the weight will come off. However, never exercise to the point of exhaustion. If your body is telling you it's tired, stop exercising immediately. Also, if you feel faint or dizzy, have shortness of breath, experience heart palpitations, have an increase in vaginal bleeding or have trouble walking or seeing, stop exercising and contact your health care provider.

You don't have to go to the gym to get in a workout. Walking, jogging, cycling,

dancing, or exercise DVDs are inexpensive options. You can also build strength by using exercise balls or bands, your own body weight and household items like cartons of milk or laundry soap instead of purchasing weights. Just keep it up!

NUTRITION

The most important substance your body needs – next to oxygen – is water. Your body and your brain need at least eight 8-ounce glasses of water each day to operate at their best. Water will also help you feel full and does not contain unnecessary sugar and caffeine like many sodas or sports and energy drinks.

Don't skip meals. It is best to eat 4-6 small meals each day (300-400 calories each). Your body needs a constant supply of energy to help you take care of baby, work, exercise and keep up the house. Skipping meals means that you are more likely to overeat the next time you get the chance. Pack healthy snacks and lunches to take with you to work or to play.

Eat plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables. These are full of the important nutrients that will help your body get well faster and be healthier in the years to come. Continue to take a daily vitamin pill that contains at least 400 micrograms of folic acid.

It is important that you work hard to lose your "baby weight" before you get pregnant and start gaining once again. Women who are overweight or obese are more likely to have problems during pregnancy and delivery.

Tip: Exercises that use large muscle groups (walking, swimming, biking, jogging, snowshoeing or cross country skiing) will elevate your heart rate and burn calories faster.

From Eight to Twelve Months



Your baby has reached the age of curiosity and your house probably shows it. Without your constant supervision, he can get into all kinds of trouble. You'll need to check your house often for possible dangers to your curious baby. Your baby will be determined to discover what lies behind cupboard doors and inside drawers. Everything is a toy. . . and everything goes into the mouth! This is an important time to begin setting limits for your baby. Your baby is probably pulling himself up to a standing position and is making some attempts to walk. Soon he'll be able to walk with your help and perhaps take a step or two all by himself.

Schedule visits for well child care and immunizations at 9 months and 12 months of age

Your Developing Baby

All babies are not exactly the same, but most babies like to do similar things. The 8 to 12 month old is practicing the skills that lead to walking. He may ignore your attempts to play other games at times because he is so involved with practicing these skills.

GENERAL DEVELOPMENT

By your baby's first birthday, he will have tripled in weight. His body proportion is changing as his head grows more slowly and his trunk, arms, and legs grow more rapidly. He may have as many as eight teeth by his first birthday. He should be sleeping through the night and taking one or two naps each day. He is working on finger feeding and cup drinking.



DEVELOPMENT OF LARGE MUSCLES

Your baby is learning to get into and out of a sitting position by himself. He's crawling and creeping (maybe backward at first), pulling up to a stand, cruising along furniture and finally taking those first independent steps.

DEVELOPMENT OF SMALL MUSCLES

Your baby will enjoy dropping things and watching them fall, poking and exploring things with his index finger and picking things up using his thumb and index finger. For short periods of time he will enjoy turning the pages of a large book and looking at the pictures with you.

DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL SKILLS

Your baby is becoming an explorer. He will enjoy crawling or toddling off to examine new people and things as long as he can see you and return to your lap for security. He loves simple repeat games such as peek-a-boo and will play such games as long as he can find an adult to play with him. He also likes routines and feels secure by having events happen in a consistent manner.

A WORD ABOUT PLAYPENS

A playpen can be used as a safe rest and play area for your developing baby provided that certain safety rules are followed.

Like anything else, your baby needs to get used to a playpen. If you set it up when he is already crawling around and cruising he may look at it as a punishment. It is better to set the playpen up before he is 8 months of age. Then begin placing him in it for a half-hour or so several times a day. This way your baby will accept it as a normal part of his daily routine and will play in it happily whenever you need a quiet hour.

You can record your baby's important developmental milestones in the **Baby Your Baby Health Keepsake**.

Setting Limits: The Beginning of Discipline

Much supervision is needed to keep your baby safe as he explores his expanding world. Certain actions should not be allowed to become habit, as this can create more problems when he becomes a toddler. Now is the time for you to set limits.

Sometimes parents get into traps when they don't correct behaviors that may be "cute" when the baby begins them. Biting, pulling hair, pulling eyeglasses and jewelry, and hitting should be stopped when babies first do these things. Your baby needs to learn not to harm other people.

Discipline teaches your baby by giving him useful information about acceptable behavior. This is different from punishment, which uses force to control behavior.

Your baby might be surprised, frustrated or even angry when you stop undesired behaviors. However, you must be firm and consistent to help him learn what is "okay" and "not okay." Babies test limits in order to find out what the rules are. The same message of "not okay" will need repeating many times before he knows that the rules/limits are for real.

WHAT CAN PARENTS DO?

There are several ways of setting limits for your baby now in order for him to become a happy, well-adjusted child in later years.

Techniques for Setting Limits:

- Telling your baby “no” or “stop” by itself does not help him learn. Telling must be accompanied by action to help him know what is expected, or what is not acceptable. For example, “No, you cannot touch the TV,” must be followed by picking your baby up and removing him from the TV set.
- Quickly remove your baby from unacceptable or unsafe areas.
- Place forbidden or dangerous objects out of reach.
- Redirect his attention to a new toy, looking out the window, singing a song, etc.
- When your baby grabs things he shouldn’t, pull his hand away or take the object from him. This action, along with a stern look and a firm “No!” gives a strong message but it must be done consistently and immediately. A serious look and eye-to-eye contact can be very effective.
- Spanking or slapping hands is not effective and can often “backfire” when overused. Don’t hurt or be mean to your baby. Remember that he is still just a baby.
- If you become really angry, quickly put your baby in his crib or playpen for a few minutes while you cool off. Your quick action, stern look and unhappy voice will tell your baby that his behavior was not acceptable, and he will not like being isolated.

The key to effective discipline is to act **quickly** and **consistently**. Be prepared to **repeat** your actions many times until your baby learns what is not acceptable.

Hearing and Speech

By 8 months of age your baby will be repeating many sounds that he hears. The babbling will begin to sound like real speech and parents should encourage this by repeating the baby’s sounds. By one year of age, 2-3 words are used, but these words may not be clear.

The following checklist is a guide to normal hearing and speech development for an 8 to 12-month-old baby. As time goes by, check to see if your baby does most of the following:

- When sleeping in a quiet room, begins to move, wakes up or cries when someone talks or when there is a noise
- Listens to people talking
- Searches or looks around when hearing a new sound, even when the sound is not loud
- Turns or looks up when you call
- Uses his voice to get attention
- Makes babbling noises sounding like real speech

If you think your baby cannot hear, ask your health care provider to refer you to a licensed audiologist who has experience in testing for hearing loss in babies.



Diaper Rash

“Diaper rash” may vary from a mild redness that clears on its own, to painful open sores or blisters that need medical care. Diaper rash may be caused by too much moisture, chafing (friction or rubbing) or lengthy contact with wet or messy diapers.

Wet skin is more easily injured by friction or dry skin, so the moisture in a wet diaper can make a baby’s skin red and sore. Rubbing between moist folds of the skin makes the problem worse.

Diaper rash is more likely to happen when babies:

- are not kept clean and dry.
- have frequent bowel movements, especially in overnight diapers.
- are taking antibiotics.
- get older, 8 to 10 months of age.

There are several ways to prevent your baby getting diaper rash:

- Gently clean baby with mild soap and water. Smearing on ointments without washing isn’t enough.
- Don’t clean too much with soaps or commercial wipes. They can dry out the skin and cause irritation.

- Change diapers immediately after bowel movements.
- Use milk soap when washing cloth diapers.

When diaper rash appears you can do the following:

- Change diapers (both cloth and disposable) more often even if the diaper is just a little wet.
- After gently washing, pat baby dry and keep his diaper off for at least 15 minutes.
- Apply an ointment that contains zinc oxide to the rash.

Once diaper rash appears, the skin is more vulnerable to yeast, which lives in the stool. This causes a more severe rash which lasts longer. This bright red rash does not respond to usual ointments and requires a prescription. Call your health care provider if your baby has a rash that does not clear up within 2-3 days.

Immunizations

Babies are born with a natural immunity or resistance to disease. It’s nature’s way of starting them off on the right track. Unfortunately, that natural immunity doesn’t last forever. In fact, a baby’s protection may last less than 12 months. That’s why babies need immunizations! They need them early for protection during the first years of life. To ignore the need, or to put it off, is a gamble you should not take with your baby’s health.

You can help protect your baby by getting him immunized. This is a great start for a healthier baby. Your health care provider will advise you during your baby’s well child care visits what immunizations are needed at certain ages. You may also receive information and immunizations for your baby from your local health department. Be sure to keep a record of all your baby’s immunizations.

For more information about immunizations, call the Immunization Hotline at 1-800-275-0659 or visit www.immunize-utah.org.

Safety

Babies around 9 months of age are extremely curious. Your baby is probably crawling everywhere. He likes to grab objects and put them into his mouth. He also pulls himself up and everything else down.

And so the safety problems multiply with your baby's ever increasing ability to move around. It may be inconvenient to rearrange your household for the safety of a crawler, but when you look at it from his point of view, it can save all of you a lot of trouble – and it can prevent injuries.

Here are a few important safety rules to follow:

BATH

- Never leave baby alone or with a sibling in or near the bathtub – not even for a second; it takes only seconds to drown.
- To prevent scalds from hot tap water, reduce the setting on your water heater to its lowest or “warm” setting. This should ensure that the temperature on your water heater is set no higher than 120°.

POISONS

- All household cleaning agents, polishes and poisons, as well as all medicines and illegal drugs, should be kept in locked cabinets. Drawers with anything dangerous (perfume, cosmetics, scissors, etc.) should be locked.

CAR SAFETY

- Be sure your infant is at least two years old and at least 20 pounds before turning him forward facing in a car seat.
- Never allow anyone to hold baby on their lap while riding in the car.

HAZARDOUS OBJECTS

- Keep pins and other sharp objects out of baby's reach. Check floors for buttons, beads, and other small items.
- Install safety plugs or outlet covers in wall sockets (if you haven't already done so).
- Remove, where possible, electric cords and sharp-edged furniture.
- Lower the crib mattress as baby begins to sit and stand.

SMOTHERING, STRANGULATION

- Keep plastic bags, long telephone cords, and window blind cords away from baby.
- Do not let baby chew or suck on a balloon, small objects or large pieces of food.
- Do not put necklaces or pacifier cords around baby's neck.

FALLS

- Install baby gates at the top of stairs or across open doorways to prevent baby from falling or entering unsafe areas. For added protection, gates should also be placed at the bottom of stairs. If there is a door at the bottom of the stairs and it is kept closed, this will provide

adequate protection against baby climbing the stairs and tumbling down.

- Choose a gate with a straight top edge and rigid mesh screen.
- Avoid gates that have V-shaped or diamond-shaped openings at the top or between the gate slats. If you have one of these gates, you should replace it with one that will meet safety guidelines.
- Make sure the baby gate is securely fastened to the doorway or stairway. Many babies love to try to climb safety gates.

Remember, even though a sturdy gate may be purchased and installed, close supervision is still necessary.

Never leave baby alone or with a sibling in or near the bathtub – not even for a second.

PLAYPENS

- Mesh netting should have a very small weave – smaller than the tiny buttons on a baby's clothing.
- Slats on wooden playpens should be no more than 2 3/8 inches apart.
- Never leave baby in a mesh playpen with the drop-side down.
- Remove large toys, bumper pads, or boxes from inside the playpen; they can be used for climbing out.
- Don't string toys across the playpen.
- Check vinyl or fabric-covered rails frequently for holes and tears. A teething baby may chew off pieces and choke.
- If staples are used to attach the mesh side to the floor plate, make sure none are loose or missing.
- Never use playpen that has holes in the mesh sides.

Nutrition

Breast milk continues to be the ideal food for your baby along with added foods. Foods added to your baby's diet must provide the nutrients needed in the textures and consistencies that match your baby's ability to chew and swallow. Baby foods, along with ground and chopped table foods and finger foods, are becoming

a more substantial part of his diet, in preparation for weaning. Baby should be eating three meals including a variety of foods and increased textures. Self-feeding skills are emerging and he wants to feed himself.

With this transition in feeding come concerns about choking. Babies can choke on almost any food. They are most likely to have trouble with foods that are round or hard. Hot dogs are a food that infants and children most often choke on. Others include candy, nuts, grapes, cookies, carrots, apples, popcorn, peanut butter and sausage-shaped meats. Many of these foods are just the right size to plug the throat.

To prevent choking in infants and children, practice the following suggestions:

- Watch baby when he is eating. Never leave him alone.
- Avoid tough foods. If baby doesn't have good chewing skills, cook foods well and mash into very small pieces. If you have doubts about a food, don't feed it to baby.
- Make sure that baby is sitting upright when eating and drinking. Baby bottles should be held and not propped.
- Be prepared – ask your health care provider what to do if choking occurs. Post Red Cross instructions for choking in infants on the fridge.

Time Together

In a time when television, movies, computers and other distractions have become common babysitters, you must not forget the importance of spending quality time with your baby. Your baby would much rather look at you making funny faces than watch even the best television rerun.

There are some basic activities you can do with your baby to help him learn, develop, and grow closer to you. Here are a few:

- Read often to baby. Show him pictures. Point to the pictures and make up a story if you wish. Most babies will grab the book at first and will probably be more interested in feeling it and turning pages. With time, baby will develop more patience to watch and listen as you read.
- Play games such as “peek-a-boo” or clapping hands, rolling a ball back and forward.
- Playfully and carefully wrestle or roll around on the floor with baby.
- Talk to baby face-to-face.
- Keep hugging and loving baby.