

## 9-month milestones

By the age of 9 months, your baby has a relatively consistent sleep schedule, is mostly sleeping through the night, eats a significant amount of solid food, can sit independently and crawl, and may even be starting to walk!



### What most babies are doing at this age:

#### SOCIAL / EMOTIONAL MILESTONES

- Can show several facial expressions like surprise, happy, sad, and angry
- Looks when name is called
- Reacts when you leave
- Laughs or smiles during peekaboo
- Has a comfort object like a stuffed animal or blanket

#### MOVEMENT MILESTONES

- Can sit up and sit independently
- Can pass objects from one hand to the other
- Can use fingers to move food toward mouth
- Can crawl independently on all fours
- May try to walk while holding onto something
- Can use fingers to "rake" food

#### SLEEPING HABITS

- » The average 9-month-old needs about 12-16 hours of sleep per day, including about 2 naps a day
- » 9 to 12 hours of sleep should come at night
- » Though sleep patterns still vary a lot, a typical schedule starts at 7am and ends at 7pm

#### LANGUAGE / COMMUNICATION MILESTONES

- Makes sounds closer to actual language like "mamamama"
- Lifts arms when baby wants to be picked up
- Starting to chatter more, and may understand simple commands such as "give me the toy"

#### COGNITIVE MILESTONES

- Looks for objects that have dropped out of sight
- Can bang objects together
- Explores how things work
- Loves opening and closing things

#### EATING HABITS

- » Breastmilk or formula should still be the primary source of nutrition
- » Ideally, baby should be getting 2-3 meals per day, each consisting of 2-4 tablespoons of pureed or mashed foods
- » Offer a variety of foods including fruits, vegetables, grains, and proteins such as meat, chicken, fish, and beans



### SLEEPING THROUGH THE NIGHT

By 9 months, most healthy babies are sleeping through the night, and take about two naps per day

1. Use a bedtime routine (like bath, changing into pajamas, story time and milk, tooth brushing, lullaby) to help babies fall asleep (but no bottle in the crib)
2. Keep a consistent schedule so your baby is ready and tired for the bedtime routine and learns healthy sleep habits
3. At 9 months old, most babies need 11-12 hours of sleep at night and 2-3 hours of daytime naps. Avoid excessive napping during the day, which can interfere with night sleep

If you choose to sleep train, use these steps to implement it:

1. Use a consistent bedtime routine
2. Set consistent bedtimes and wake times
3. Reduce nighttime feedings in amount and frequency by gradually reducing morning feedings and pusing by 15 mins
4. Encourage self-soothing by putting baby to bed awake
5. Keep baby physically active during the day

## 9-month Activities

Baby may be just starting to say actual words at this stage, like “mama” or “dada”. Crawling also usually starts to really manifest at this stage, making your baby much more mobile than they previously were. Encourage both of these skills, as well as other cognitive skills and eating solids.

### SOCIAL / EMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES

- » Practice conversations by saying something to baby, waiting for a reply, then replying again. This gets baby used to the flow of conversation
- » Limit screen time, as babies learn by interacting, playing, and talking with others
- » Repeat baby’s sounds and say simple words that incorporate those sounds. For instance, if baby says “mamamama”, then repeat “mamamama” and then say “grandma”
- » Ask for positive behavior. For example, say “sit down” instead of “don’t stand”
- » Teach baby to wave “bye-bye” or shake head to indicate “no”. Make these motions as you say these words out loud and carry out the action so baby learns to associate

### COGNITIVE ACTIVITIES

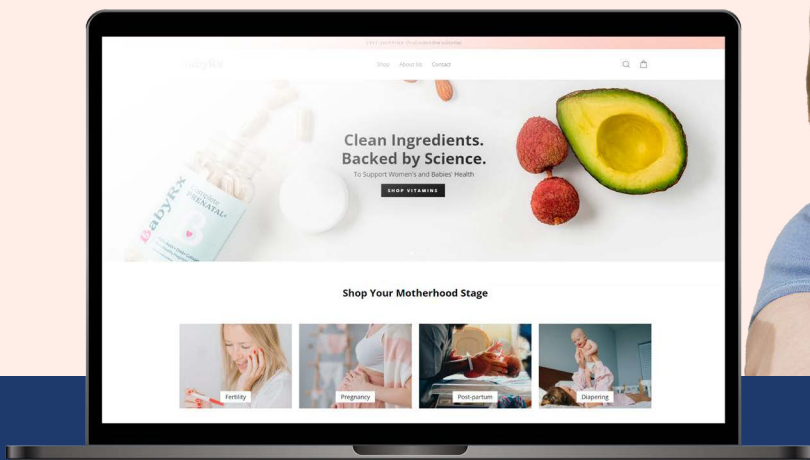
- » Sing to baby and play music; try dancing too so baby can start to develop rhythm
- » Try giving baby a toy music instrument and play music together, such as baby’s favorite songs
- » Sand play is a fun activity for baby to explore textures and practice building and shaping with their hands
- » Shape sorting is a classic baby game where baby puts objects of different shapes into corresponding holes
- » Continue playing with foods, and let baby feel foods with different textures as well as practicing bringing them from the plate to his or her mouth

### MOVEMENT ACTIVITIES

- » Dump blocks from a container and practice putting them back together or sorting them with baby
- » Place toys out of reach and encourage baby to crawl, roll, or scoot to go get them
- » Play tunnels can encourage your baby to practice crawling and moving around
- » Pushing toys with wheels like toy shopping carts or small wagons are great ways to encourage walking
- » Activity tables with interactive toys and wheels can provide a stable surface to pull up, stand, and walk
- » Ride-on toys, like small cars or scooters, are a fun way to encourage baby to work on his or her balance

### LANGUAGE / COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES

- » Read to baby by reading simple sentences aloud and describing pictures. Respond when baby babbles with sentences like “yes! that’s an elephant!”
- » Point things out and name them while on walks. Describe them to baby and say what they do and cool facts about them
- » Play clapping and sing-along games. Baby should be starting to really pick up words and anticipate what comes next in songs
- » Phone talk with an imaginary phone. Take an everyday object like a banana, and pretend to talk to someone baby knows. Then give phone to baby for him or her to pretend talking



# BabyRx

[babyrx.com](http://babyrx.com)