

# Babies from birth to crawling

## Birth – 9 months

safe kids now

### Baby is learning

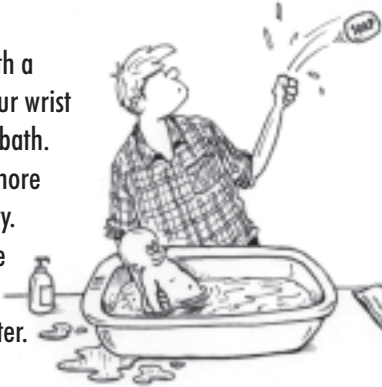
Each child develops at their own pace, usually through similar stages and order of development. Your baby will start to wriggle and roll at about 3 months, sit up at about 6 months and crawl at about 9 months. Your child will also start to reach and grasp for objects and put them into their mouth. Understanding your child's development as they grow will help you gain a great deal of satisfaction and enjoyment from your child and help to keep them safe.

### Common Safety Concerns

- Baby rolling off the change table, bench or bed.
- Choking on a small item found lying around.
- Scalding by a hot drink being spilled over the child while being held by a carer.
- Accidental overdose of medication.

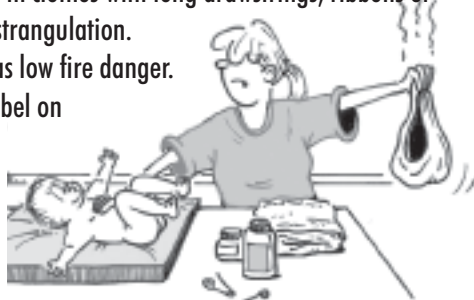
### Bathing

- Prepare to bath and dress your baby by putting everything you need within your reach. Never leave your child unattended.
- Place a non-slip mat in the bottom of the bath to avoid baby slipping.
- Check the water temperature with a thermometer or the inside of your wrist before placing your baby in the bath. The temperature should be no more than 38° C to avoid a scald injury.
- Always stay with your baby while bathing. Never take your eyes off baby when they are near water.
- Ensure the hot water tap cannot be turned on.



### Dressing

- Never leave your baby alone on the change table, benches or bed.
- Do not dress your baby in clothes with long drawstrings, ribbons or cords that could cause strangulation.
- Choose clothing that has low fire danger. Look for the fire risk label on children's nightclothes.



### Feeding

- If bottle-feeding, always check the milk temperature before giving it to your baby. Microwave ovens heat milk unevenly so always shake the bottle to mix its contents before feeding your baby.
- Never prop a bottle for your baby to feed alone.
- Always put hot drinks down when holding your baby. If spilled on your child, hot drinks will cause severe scald injuries.
- When starting solids at 4-6 months, finely mash foods to avoid choking, then progress to coarsely mashed food.
- When giving your baby medicine, always read the label carefully and never give more than the recommended dose.



### Sleeping

- Only use a cot that meets the Australian Standard. They are easily recognised by the Safebaby tag.
- Ensure all curtain cords are out of reach. Position the cot away from curtain cords that could strangle your baby.
- Do not use bumpers or pillows in the cot.
- Place your baby on their back to sleep.
- Do not put your baby in a pram to sleep unsupervised because of the risk of smothering.
- Make sure a rocking cradle cannot rock while your baby sleeps.



## At Play

- Make a safe play area for your baby away from heaters, stairs and other dangers.
- Keep your child's play area clear of small items that may be a choking hazard, such as beads, coins and buttons.
- Store all poisons up high and out of reach. Take particular care with household cleaners and medications.
- Place lids on nappy buckets and store them up high to avoid poisoning and drowning.
- Separate dogs from babies especially at the dog's feeding times.
- If you use a bouncer, place it on the floor – never on a raised surface.
- Baby walkers are not recommended because of the high rate of injury.
- Ensure that your pool or spa is properly fenced.

Your local Council will advise you on the regulations that govern pools and spas.

- Young children often get medicines out of handbags – keep handbags out of reach.



## Out and about

- Use a Standards approved car restraint. Contact your local Council to hire car restraints.
- Ensure that the restraint is installed correctly. An incorrectly fitted car restraint increases the risk of injury to your child.
- Adjust the harness to fit the child on every trip.
- Your baby should be travelling in a forward facing restraint when he/she reaches 9 to 12 kg in weight.
- Never leave your baby alone in the car. When you leave your car, take your baby with you even for small errands.
- Use a Standards approved pram and place all bags under the pram to avoid it overbalancing.
- Always use a harness in the pram, stroller and supermarket trolley and adjust it to fit your baby every time.
- Beware that little fingers can become trapped in hinges of prams, strollers and doors.
- Protect your baby from the sun by dressing them in light-weight, long sleeved clothing and a hat, finding shade and using baby sunscreen.



## Toys

- Toys need to be durable and washable, have smooth edges and no small parts that can be swallowed.
- Check that no fur or crumbed foam from stuffed toys can be removed from the toy and swallowed or poked into noses and ears.

## safe kids now General Tips on Safety

1. Set a good example. You are a role model.  
Your child will watch everything you do and try to imitate you.
2. Have a professional install or check your child car restraint.
3. Only buy nursery furniture that displays a 'Safebaby' tag.
4. Install a smoke alarm in your child's bedroom as well as other areas in your home.
5. Install a pool fence that complies with regulations to reduce the risk of drowning. Seek advice from your local Council.

### For more information

Your local Maternal and Child Health nurse

Maternal and Child Health Line 24 hours

13 22 29

The Royal Children's Hospital Safety Centre for a variety of safety products

9345 5085

VicRoads on advice for choosing and using restraints

1300 360 745

RACV for correct and professional installation of restraints in your car

9790 2190

Poisons Information Centre in case of an emergency

13 11 26

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