



Making the Most of Well-Baby Visits

Once you've left the hospital and the initial examinations and tests have been done, you'll begin a series of "well-baby" visits: regularly scheduled visits to the doctor for immunizations and routine checks for normal development. Your first visit should be when your baby is 1 to 3 weeks old. Regular well-baby visits can detect early stages of potentially harmful illnesses.

Be Prepared

- Schedule well-baby visits and sick-care visits separately.
- If your baby is sick during a scheduled well-baby visit, make sure you let the receptionist know when you arrive.
- Write down questions you have for your doctor and take them to the appointment with you.
- Make sure your questions are answered before you leave the office. Don't be afraid to ask for a clearer explanation.
- Read the immunization consent forms carefully before your baby receives her shots. They'll include possible side effects, which you can discuss with your doctor.



Physical Exam

During each visit, your doctor will weigh your baby and measure his length, the circumference of his head and soft spot and his reflexes. Your doctor may also discuss your family history of diseases.

Guidance

Your child's doctor will want to discuss milestones: how well your baby is progressing in his development. This is a good time to voice your questions and concerns.

Other Routine Exams

A skin test for tuberculosis, a blood test to screen for lead and a cholesterol test may be part of the well-baby exam.

THE SCHEDULE

The schedule of well-baby visits varies, depending on your schedule and what your doctor recommends.

	less than 1 month	2 months	4 months	6 months	9 to 15 months	18 to 24 months
physical exam	■	■	■	■	■	■
developmental assessment	■	■	■	■	■	■
immunizations	■	■	■	■	■	■
TB testing					■	
lead screening						■
cholesterol screening (for children at high risk)						■