out and about

Going back to work or school?

Everything you need to know

Going out with baby

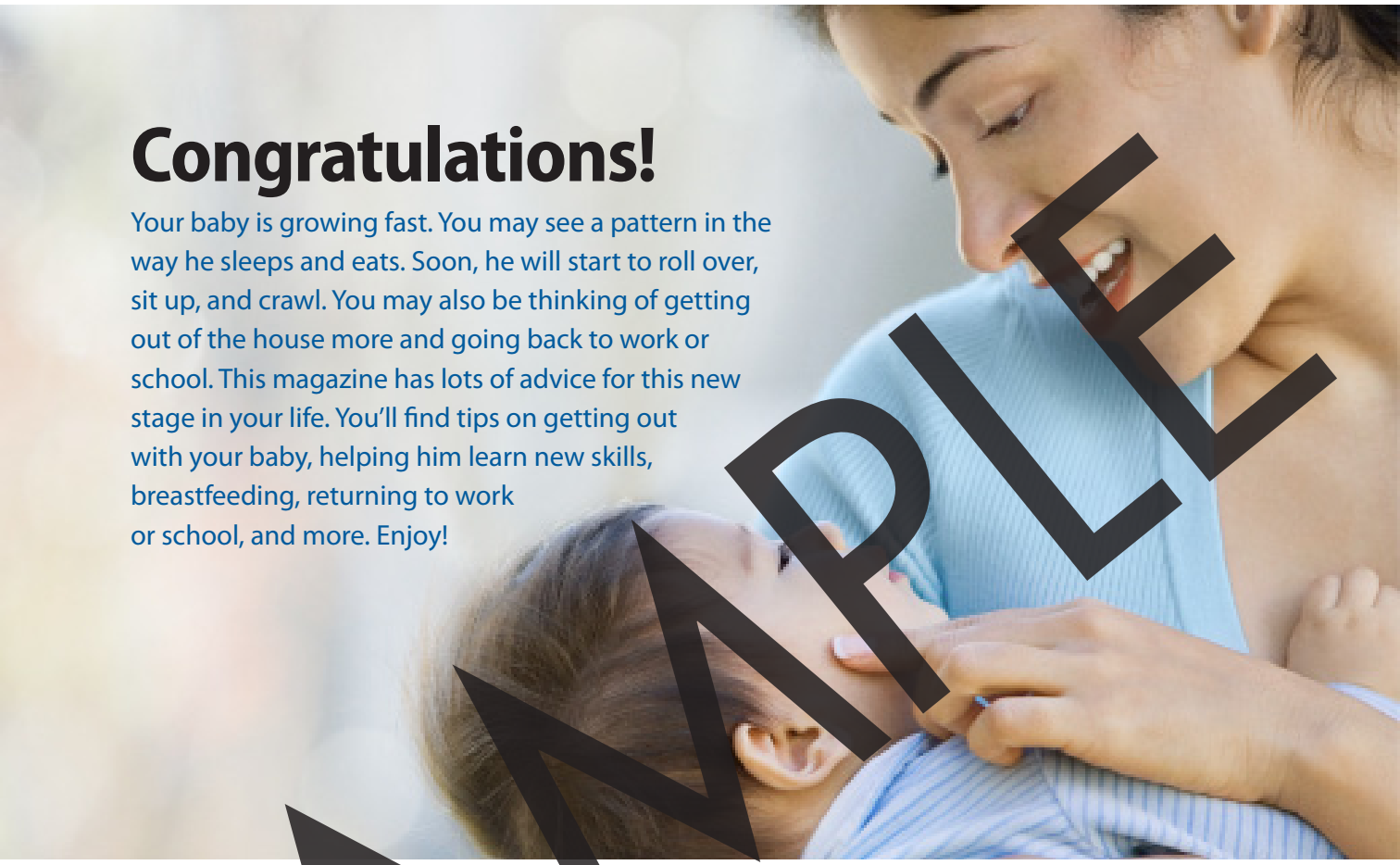
Tips for breastfeeding on the go, packing your diaper bag, and more

Just for mom

3 easy energy boosters

National WIC Association

SAMPLE



Congratulations!

Your baby is growing fast. You may see a pattern in the way he sleeps and eats. Soon, he will start to roll over, sit up, and crawl. You may also be thinking of getting out of the house more and going back to work or school. This magazine has lots of advice for this new stage in your life. You'll find tips on getting out with your baby, helping him learn new skills, breastfeeding, returning to work or school, and more. Enjoy!

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How Your Baby Grows

In the months ahead, your baby will be more active and start using new skills. Help him learn with these simple activities. **Every baby is different, so your child may do things earlier or later than these ages.**

	2 MONTHS	4 MONTHS	6 MONTHS
What Your Baby May Do	Smile and coo, like to look at faces, lift head up for short periods while lying on tummy.	Babble, like to play with people, reach for toys with one hand, roll over from front to back.	Make vowel sounds ("ah," "eh,"), pass things from one hand to another, sit with some help.
How You Can Help Him Learn and Grow	Talk to your baby, hold and kiss him, lay him on his tummy every day for a few minutes at a time.	Talk to your baby, let him hold a toy, play with soft blocks, increase daily tummy time.	Dance and sing to music together, let him play with safe objects like plastic cups and empty boxes.

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Your Baby's **Behavior**

You and your baby are getting better at communicating with each other. If you watch and respond quickly to her cues, she will feel safe and secure.

FEEDING

Your baby will let you know she's hungry by making sucking noises, putting her hands in her mouth, puckering her lips, or searching for the breast. She'll also let you know she's full by sucking more slowly, relaxing her hands and arms, turning away from the nipple, or falling asleep. You may notice periods of time when your baby wants to eat more often. This may be due to a growth spurt.

SLEEPING

At 6 weeks, waking at night is still normal and healthy. Keep the lights low and stay quiet while you feed or change your baby so she will more easily go back to sleep. By about 3 months, she may start to sleep more during the night and less during the day. At about 6 months, she may sleep up to 6 hours at a time. She will still wake at night when she needs something.

CRYING

Although it is stressful to hear a baby cry, crying is normal for all babies. It is one way they communicate with you. When your baby cries, first try to figure out why. She may need a diaper change, a feeding, or quiet time. If you've checked everything and she's still crying, hold her close and repeat the same action over and over until she quiets down. You can sing to her, rock her, or massage her back, arms, and legs. Be patient; **calming a baby can take time**. *Never* shake your baby.

Baby Proofing Your Home

Make your house safe for your child before she starts to crawl. Here's how:

- **Get on your hands and knees so you can see things from baby's eye level. Remove houseplants, hanging tablecloths, and anything that might be dangerous, such as small items baby could choke on.**
- **Use safety gates at the top and bottom of stairs.**
- **Install window guards above the first floor.**
- **Put cords from drapes and blinds out of baby's reach.**
- **Use outlet covers or safety plugs for electrical outlets.**
- **Move all electrical cords out of baby's reach.**
- **Put safety latches on drawers and cabinets in baby's reach.**
- **Put a toilet lock on toilet lids, or always keep the bathroom door closed.**

WIC Counselor **Tip**

"It's never too early to start reading to your baby. She'll love hearing your voice and being close to you. Point to the pictures and talk about them. Looking at books together will help her grow up to love reading."

—Sherii Carpenter, WIC Lactation and Peer Counselor, Huntington, WV

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PHOTO PROVIDED COURTESY OF THE VALLEY HEALTH WIC PROGRAM

Breastfeeding: What to Expect

You may notice a pattern to your baby's feedings. You will also have a good milk supply. Your baby is going longer between feedings than he did when he was a newborn. He is probably waking up 2 or 3 times a night to nurse.

When your baby has a growth spurt, he will breastfeed more, and your body will produce more milk. Trust your body to provide the milk he needs.

5 Things to Do Before You Return to Work or School

Moms who go back to work or school can pump their breast milk into a container. Then dad or a caregiver can feed it to baby later. Here are five steps that can help.

1. **Ease your way back.** If possible, make your first week at work a short week (start on a Wednesday, for example). You might also ask for a more flexible schedule for the first few months. If you're a student, take fewer classes if you can.

2. **Build up a supply of breast milk.** At least two weeks before you return to work or school, start pumping breast milk and store it in the freezer.

3. **Talk to your manager about pumping during breaks.** If you're going to school, set up a schedule that allows time for you to pump or nurse your baby.

4. **Find a private place to pump at work or school.** You may be able to use a lactation room, an office with a door, or a conference room. The Affordable Care Act requires employers with 50 or more employees to provide reasonable time and space (not a bathroom) for mothers to pump breast milk for one year after a child's birth.

5. **Set up a support system.** Ask your manager, teacher, or other coworkers or students if they know moms at the company or school who have breastfed while working or taking classes. They can offer support.

WIC Counselor Tip

"Ask your WIC counselor about how to pump and store breast milk and any issues or concerns you may have. She may even be able to provide you with a breast pump."

—Bianca Quiñonez, WIC Breastfeeding Peer Counselor, San Diego, CA

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Introducing Your Baby to a Bottle

Once you start pumping breast milk, dad or a caregiver can feed it to your baby using a bottle. Here are some bottle-feeding tips to keep in mind. If you use formula, many of these tips apply to you too.

- **Have dad or someone else give your baby her first bottle.** Your baby connects you with breastfeeding, so if you hold her, she may want to nurse and refuse the bottle.
- **Be patient.** It may take your baby several tries before she starts feeding from a bottle. If she won't drink from it, try a different kind of bottle or nipple. If she still has a hard time, ask your WIC counselor for more ideas.
- **Always hold your baby and the bottle when feeding.** Never put her to bed with a bottle or prop it in her mouth. This can cause choking, tooth decay, and ear infections.
- **Never heat a bottle in the microwave.** This can create hot spots that could burn your baby's mouth. Instead, put the prepared bottle in a bowl of warm water for a few minutes.

MOM TALK

"As a working mom, my time is precious. By breastfeeding, I haven't missed any days of work and haven't had to go to the doctor a lot because my baby has been healthy. I also save lots of money by getting more food from WIC and by not buying formula!"

—Ana, WIC mom, Florida

No Solid Foods Yet

Your baby is not ready for cereal or any other solid foods yet. She can't swallow solids safely, and her digestive system isn't ready to handle them. She should have nothing but breast milk or formula until she's about 6 months old.

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TOP LEFT PHOTO PROVIDED COURTESY OF THE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Adjusting to Childcare

You and your baby will need time to adjust to childcare. Here are ways to make things easier.

- **Do a trial run.** Before your first day apart, take your baby to his caregiver so they can get to know each other. This way, you will also practice spending some time apart.
- **Stick to the same routine every morning.** It helps for him to know what to expect.
- **Keep your goodbyes short and sweet.** It may be hard to leave a crying child, but once you say goodbye, it's best to leave quickly. Most children do well after their parent leaves.
- **Stay in touch with your caregiver.** If you're concerned, it's okay to call to see how your baby is doing.

Choosing Childcare

Start your search by going to the daycare center or sitter and asking some questions:

Caregivers: What kind of training or experience does the caregiver have? How many children are there for each caregiver?

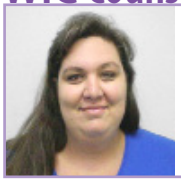
Activities: Is there a mix of physical activity, quiet play, and rest? Are there toys and books for different ages?

Feeding: Does the caregiver have experience caring for breastfed babies? Does she know how to store and handle breast milk? Are you welcome to nurse your baby there before or after work or on breaks?

Cleanliness: Are play areas and toys clean? Does the caregiver wash her hands before and after feedings and after diaper changes?

Safety: Is the place safe for children? Is the caregiver trained in first aid and CPR? Are toxic materials like cleaning supplies and medicines kept away from kids?

WIC Counselor Tip



"To help comfort your baby when you are away from him, give him a reminder of home. Let him take a familiar stuffed animal, toy, or blanket to daycare."

—Tamara Ferrebee, WIC Peer Counselor, Oklahoma City, OK

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MOM TALK

"I love wearing an infant sling when I go out with my baby. My WIC counselor helped me choose one and showed me how to use it correctly. My hands are free, and my baby and I enjoy the closeness. It also makes it easy to nurse." —Ashley, WIC mom, Texas

Breastfeeding On the Go

If you feel uncomfortable about nursing in public, here are some tips to ease your mind.

1. **Wear a tank top or T-shirt with a blouse or sweater over it.** You can lift up the tank top or T-shirt to nurse and cover yourself with the blouse or sweater.
2. **Bring a small blanket.** You can tuck a corner of the blanket under your bra strap and drape it over your baby as you nurse.
3. **Look for convenient places to nurse.** A dressing room in a clothing store can be quiet and private. Large grocery or department stores may have sitting rooms near restrooms. Your car may also be a good place to nurse.
4. **Keep in mind that most states have laws that protect mothers who nurse in a public place.** So you can feed your baby whenever and wherever she is hungry.

Do's and Don'ts of Going Out With Baby

- **Do make sure your car seat is installed correctly.** You can find a local certified technician to inspect your car seat for free by calling 866-SEAT-CHECK or visiting seatcheck.org. Never leave your baby alone in the car, even for a moment.
- **Do protect your baby from the weather.** On cold days, dress her in one more layer than you are wearing. Always protect her from the sun. Dress her in long sleeves, pants, and a wide-brimmed hat. Put sunscreen on uncovered areas of her body, such as her face. Keep her in the shade, if possible.

- **Don't let your child near cigarette smoke.** It contains unhealthy chemicals that are harmful to her.

- **Do pack a diaper bag.** Remember to bring these basics:
  - ✓ diapers and wipes
  - ✓ a changing pad
  - ✓ burp cloths
  - ✓ a plastic bag for dirty diapers or burp cloths
  - ✓ hand sanitizer
  - ✓ a clean change of clothes

If you use formula, you'll also need to bring:

- ✓ a prepared bottle of formula in an insulated bag, or powdered formula, bottle, and water for preparing formula

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Energy **Boosters**

Middle-of-the-night diaper changes and early-morning feedings make it hard for new moms to sleep. Nap when your baby naps, if possible. Try these other tips to fight sleepiness and get more energy.

Get into bright light. It can reduce tiredness and improve your mood. Go outside during the day, sit near a sunny window, or use brighter light bulbs.

Eat a healthy snack. Raise your energy level by eating a combination of protein, whole grains, and healthy fat. Try whole-grain cereal with low-fat milk; peanut butter on whole-grain crackers; or egg salad and tomato on whole-wheat bread.

Do some stretches. Stretching can release tension and boost energy. Stand up and raise your arms as high as you can above your head. Then bend over and reach for your toes.

Easy Ways to **Get Fit!**

You don't need to go to the gym to be active. Some of the things you already do can help you get fit. Take a look at how many calories you're burning with common activities.

Activity	Average Calories Burned Per Hour
Playing with kids	273
Cooking	136
Light house cleaning	170
Vacuuming	239
Grocery shopping	157
Pushing a stroller	170

3 Things to Do Just for You

You spend a lot of time caring for your baby. It's also important to take care of yourself! Here's how:

1. **Talk to a friend.** Having strong friendships helps to lower your risk of illness and depression.
2. **Go for a walk.** Physical activity makes you feel good. One idea: Get together with other moms every week and go for a walk with your babies. You'll get exercise *and* spend time with friends.
3. **Put on some music.** Studies show that listening to music can lower stress and make you feel happy and relaxed.

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