



ElternMail Berlin

YOUR CHILD AT 10 – 14 MONTHS OF AGE

Dear Mama, Dear Papa,

It is with great pleasure that we now present the latest online edition of ElternMail Berlin. In this issue you will find topics relating to your child's **FIRST BIRTHDAY, NUTRITION, and MEDIA USE.**

Next month you will receive another ElternMail with the topics such as daycare, separation anxiety, and conflicts with relatives and as a couple.

The ElternMail Team



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Introduction

It feels like just a moment ago, there was a tiny, helpless baby in your arms. Suddenly your toddler is crawling around the house, taking their first steps, sitting at the table with you, and chattering away. You may have noticed that children develop at very different speeds. It's perfectly normal for you to be happy about what your child is already able to do. And at the same time, you are sad about how fast the time has gone by and surprised at how "big" your child is.

Why is it that parents are sometimes torn?

It's quite simple: Nature wants it that way. On the one hand, mothers and fathers should help their child to become independent. On the other hand, they're supposed to protect their child.

Children need both to become strong – roots and wings.

THE 1ST BIRTHDAY - SUDDENLY MY CHILD IS NO LONGER A BABY



This is a day to celebrate! But what happens that day doesn't really matter to your child. They don't yet attach any importance to such big parties. This will allow you to keep the party small and easy to manage. If you decide to have a birthday party with guests, make sure you invite them at a time that suits your schedule and let them know in advance when the party will end.

Tip: Don't forget to congratulate yourself on this special day. After all, you've been a parent for a year now!

Childminder, daycare centre, and other childcare options

If your parental leave ends after your child's first birthday and you decide to go back to work, your child will probably start going to a daycare centre or have a childminder. Grandma, grandpa, an aunt or friends may even be able to look after your child. You may be feeling anxious about the next few months because your child is going to daycare and you are starting to work. It is normal and perfectly OK to have these concerns. Talking to someone about your concerns can help you deal with them.



Celebrate with your baby

"As long as they are still small, you can take them with you wherever you go." You've probably heard it before. It's true that babies often sleep peacefully in their prams or slings while loud music and flashing lights are playing at a party. But this impression can be misleading: Sometimes the little ones are so exhausted from all the stimulation that they just really need to sleep. At the same time, they are aware of their surroundings and do not feel relaxed afterwards, but rather agitated or restless.



Good to know: Children's ears are sensitive

Your child's ears are very sensitive. Their hearing can be affected even when they are asleep. If, for example, you want your child to be able to attend a large party despite the loud music, you should use appropriate hearing protection.

Tips:

- Start by testing how your child reacts to a party: Observe your child and stay with them. It's best if you don't stay too long. Afterwards, see how your child feels.
- Before the party, think about what you can do if your child can't calm down. Find a quiet room, take turns going outside, or maybe even go home early?
- Single or separated parents may feel more comfortable in the company of a trusted person. Perhaps you could ask grandma, grandpa, or a friend to take turns looking after your child.

Your needs and the needs of your baby take centre stage

Whether you are celebrating a first birthday or a religious festival: If you are organising a party yourself, you should be guided by your needs and the needs of your child. It is understandable that grandparents and other family members will want to join you in the celebrations. Focus on what is best for you and your child: You may not be able to enjoy the day if your child gets restless from all the commotion, or if you're exhausted from decorating and baking. The following applies here: Less is often more.

YOUR CHILD'S DIET

Your baby is now growing into a toddler, even when it comes to eating. At 10 - 12 months, the transition to family meals can begin. (You can find more information about this at the end of this ElternMail).

Three pureed meals and two milk bottles turn into:

- Breakfast
- Snack time
- Lunch
- Snack time
- Dinner

During the transitional period, it is often a mixture:

- Maybe baby food in the morning
- Family food at lunchtime, for example
- For some children, four meals are enough

Eating regularly and taking breaks

It is important to eat regularly, as this replenishes your energy levels. And it's best to take a break between meals. This gives the stomach and intestines time to rest, and your child will be hungry at the right times. You should also try to avoid milk, juice, crisps, and other snacks between meals. Still water and diluted, unsweetened tea can also help quench your thirst between meals.

Eating with and without teeth

By this point, most children already have teeth. But even without teeth, it is possible to crush and grind food in the mouth. You will usually need to mash or puree food (roughly), crush it with a fork, or cut it into small pieces. For children on Baby-Led Weaning (see the previous ElternMail for more information), not much will change as they will already be receiving appropriate food from the family table.

How to encourage independent eating

Some children start to become more independent and want to eat for themselves. This works well with food that you can eat out of your hand, such as sliced fruit or bread. If feeding your child with a spoon is not yet so easy, give your child their own spoon and feed them at the same time as you feed yourself.



Ensure your child has a safe place to eat, such as a high chair. Sitting in an upright position helps with eating and swallowing.

The plate should be full of colour and varied

Toddlers are curious about what grown-ups eat! Take advantage of this curiosity and let your child try things out. If your child doesn't like it the first time, be patient and relaxed. Then try it again. Toddlers can eat almost anything. Only very small foods such as nuts or currants (choking hazard!) or raw foods such as sushi, raw sausage, or raw milk cheese (which may contain pathogenic bacteria) are not suitable for toddlers. Also, you should not use honey either. Unfortunately, it will stick to your child's teeth and can attack them (caries). In rare cases, honey contains dangerous bacteria. These can damage the intestines and/or muscles and the respiratory system.

And this is on the plate:

- Colourful means healthy: Fruit and vegetables are rich in vitamins and minerals. They should therefore be present at every meal. Whole, sliced, grated, or steamed - whatever your child prefers!
- Wholegrain bread, muesli, potatoes, rice, pasta, or other grain products such as millet, couscous/bulgur, etc: These foods are a source of carbohydrates and energy for the body and metabolism.
- Milk, unsweetened yoghurt, quark, meat, fish, egg, cheese: A small amount of this on the plate will be sufficient. These animal foods are an important source of protein, calcium, iron, vitamin D, and vitamin B12. Vegetable protein is mainly found in soya products and legumes such as lentils, peas, beans, and some cereals (e.g. millet, oats).
- Cow's milk can now be replaced by commercial infant formula. Plant-based drinks made from soya, oats, spelt, almonds, etc. do not have the same nutritional value as cow's milk (e.g. energy, protein, calcium). They can be given, from time to time, to babies from the age of one year as part of a mixed diet.
- It is particularly important to plan meals carefully if you are feeding your children a vegetarian or vegan diet. It's a good idea to find out more about such diets or seek advice from qualified specialists.

YOUR CHILD'S DIET



Good to know: Suitable drinks for children

Plenty of water or unsweetened tea should be offered with every meal and, of course, in between meals. Appropriate teas include fennel, camomile, fruit, or rooibos tea. Help your child to learn how to drink from a suitable container. This can be a (leak-proof) cup, a mug, a bottle, or a sippy cup. It's not easy at first, but your child will get better with practice. During this time, the usual bottle should also be replaced with a cup or mug. Sucking is not good for your child's teeth or jaw.



Important: Children and sugar consumption

Sugar is known to be unhealthy, yet it is everywhere in our lives. Toddlers get used to the taste of sweet foods very quickly.

For example, children may not eat some vegetables because they have a different flavour. In addition, sugary foods are low in valuable nutrients, bad for your teeth, and give you a feeling of fullness when you have them as snacks. It is recommended that you give your child as little as possible from the 10th to 14th months of life. As parents, you are still in a very good position to control this at this age! You will need to develop good strategies for handling sweets as your child gets older. There are tips on this in the following ElternMails.

Food is also about being together - Be a role model

It is fun to sit at the table, and eat and talk together. Children learn a lot in there: They watch their parents, as well as other adults or siblings. It is important to have at least one adult at the table for meals who is also eating. Be a good role model in what and how you eat because your child will model your eating behaviour and table manners. For example, put your mobile phone or tablet away while you eat. Your child needs your care and attention while eating.



How much should my child eat?

You may have questions about how much food your child should have. Eating doesn't need to be a chart with numbers! Healthy children will eat exactly the amount they need. This can vary from meal to meal and day to day.

- Children who play more outside will eat more food.
- If your child ate a lot at lunch, they may want to skip their afternoon meal.
- If the food doesn't taste too good, less will be eaten. It's the same for us adults!
- If your child is ill, they may eat less than usual. But it's very important to make sure that your child drinks enough water.

How your child can learn healthy eating behaviour

- It is important for your child to feel "hungry" and "full".
- If you notice that your child is hungry or full, pay attention to these signals. Your child's eating habits now and in the future will be shaped by the way you handle their food. This can also help prevent obesity. Therefore, learn to trust yourself and your child.
- If your child doesn't want to eat any more, ask them once or twice more in a friendly way. If your child still doesn't want any more, then the meal is over.
- And if they don't want to eat anything, respect that decision too. Your child doesn't have to eat every time something is offered. Your child may have eaten a lot earlier and is not hungry. Maybe your child is tired or upset and therefore doesn't want to eat. Your task is to offer them food on a regular basis. Your child will decide whether to eat or not.
- Don't overload your child's plate. Give them some food to start with and observe their eating behaviour. If your child is still hungry, then give them more.

YOUR CHILD'S DIET

Breastfeeding and your child

- If you're no longer breastfeeding, that's OK. Many children stop breastfeeding after their first birthday. There are other ways for them to meet their nutritional needs at this age. If your baby is no longer breastfed, make sure they drink the recommended amount of formula so that your baby continues to get important nutrients.
- If you're considering weaning because you don't want to continue breastfeeding or it doesn't fit into your life, try to be gentle and slow in this process. If you have any questions about weaning, your paediatrician or midwife can help.

MEDIA USE

You've probably already noticed that your child is becoming increasingly curious. They observe you and their surroundings. When you look at your mobile phone or tablet, your child wants to look too. They may even have already discovered that they can use their finger to make the screen react. Big screens, like laptops and televisions, also become more exciting at this age.

Important:

Children can't fully engage with moving images until they are 18 months old, so they do not require a TV, tablet, smartphone, etc. before then. It is important to remember that sensory stimuli can be very intense and overwhelming for young children. That's why you should always keep an eye on your child's media consumption as they grow up.



- Do you have a well-established breastfeeding routine and want to continue with breastfeeding? Great! The World Health Organisation recommends that children should continue to be breastfed until their second birthday, even after the introduction of solid foods.

Please note: Special nutritional recommendations may apply to children with special needs (e.g. babies born prematurely, those with low birth weight or difficulty gaining weight, specific illnesses or disabilities). In this situation it is best to talk to your paediatrician and a qualified nutritionist. If you are worried about whether your child is eating enough, ask other parents for advice and share your ideas with them. This can be a great source of relief and reassurance.



Good to know: Screen time

If your child spends a lot of time in front of a screen every day, this can affect their language development. In order to learn to speak, your child needs actual exposure to the language. The main way to do this is by talking and explaining things to your child, for example by looking at and describing a children's book together. This cannot be replaced by television programmes for children.

- If your child has their own bedroom and is already sleeping there, the room should be free of such screens. There should also be no TV or laptop in your room if your child is sleeping there instead.
- Small children can still perceive the television even if it is simply on in the background. Above all, make sure your child is not watching inappropriate content (e.g. violence). It is best to keep the television switched off.
- Young children have a harder time falling asleep when they are exposed to media before bedtime. The high proportion of blue light emitted from the screen is perceived by the brain as daylight and will cause the child to be more awake. That's why watching TV and similar activities in the evening, especially right before going to bed, are particularly unfavourable.
- Children who are already very active will be made even more fidgety and restless by media content that is exciting to watch. By moving and playing, they can use their energy more effectively and are more likely to calm down.
- Children learn through observation and imitation. You are your child's role model. Therefore, try to focus on your child and the conversation you are having by putting down your mobile phone, laptop, or other technology more often.

SUPPORT AVAILABLE IN BERLIN



Berliner Familienportal

The Berliner Familienportal (family portal) offers a wide range of useful service information on the subject of the family, an events calendar for children, young people and the whole family, and advice on a range of topics such as leisure, finance, single parenting, childcare offerings and so on.

← www.berlin.de/familie



Healthy eating

You can also find basic information, downloads and links on the topic of children and healthy eating on the Berliner Familienportal:

← www.berlin.de/familie/informationen/kinder-und-gesunde-ernaehrung-338



Media use

The Berliner Familienportal also offers useful information as well as further information and links on the topic of media use:

← www.berlin.de/familie/informationen/mediennutzung-in-der-familie-324



IN GOOD COMPANY FROM THE START

With the **ElternMail Berlin**, the **Senate Department for Education, Youth and Family** aims to support and promote all parents as they embark on family life and in the years that follow. This publication, free to families, is intended to help ensure that mothers and fathers receive helpful information regarding their child's development and find practical tips and advice on supporting services in their area.

Preview of the 3rd online edition - Months 10 to 14 of your baby's life

1. How is your child doing at daycare?
2. Dealing with grandparents and other relatives
3. When grandparents or other relatives affect your relationship



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