

# ElternMail Berlin

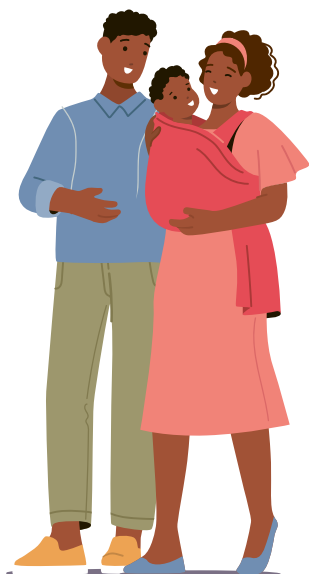
## YOUR BABY AT 5 AND 6 MONTHS OLD

**What a miracle: Babies are born being tiny and helpless. But their brains are eager to discover from the very beginning. Your baby is becoming more aware and mobile almost every day. It's fascinating to watch and accompany this little person who was only just lying in the cradle.**

We look forward to supporting you and your family with this ElternMail. Your baby is developing rapidly, and you are faced with new questions, which we are happy to answer in this ElternMail. You can expect valuable tips and exciting knowledge from our experts on months 5 and 6.



*Your ElternMail-Team*



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# RELATIONSHIP – PERSONAL FREEDOM – SEXUALITY

Even after the first few months, life with your baby is no doubt still new and exciting. At the same time, you can now feel how permanent sleep deprivation and 24-hour caregiving put a huge physical and mental strain on you. It makes mums and dads thin-skinned and sometimes impatient. All you want is a good night's sleep for once and a few brief moments to yourselves.

## The desire for personal freedom

Around the 6<sup>th</sup> month, many mums and dads feel a certain amount of “baby fatigue”. After all, everyday life largely revolves around the needs of the child. It may also feel as if you are only using baby talk and the only topics of conversation with other mothers or fathers are diapers, food and baby sleep.

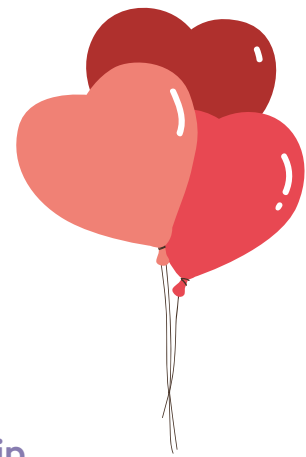
As a result, you may start feeling sad and lonely – no matter how much you enjoy spending time with your baby. These feelings and thoughts are normal and are allowed to be there. How wonderful it would be to meet up with a friend again and just chat. No baby in your arms, no nappy changes between two breastfeeding sessions, no pap feeds in the middle of coffee and cake. Just for a moment, to be the woman or man you were before the baby arrived and to have your body to yourself.

If these thoughts have a positive feel to them, then it's crucial to create personal freedom for yourself. If you are part of a couple, ask yourself the following questions:

- **How can the two of you make it possible for each one to have some personal freedom?**
- **Can you arrange to take turns looking after the baby?**
- **Is it possible for grandparents, friends or neighbours to step in for short periods of time and on a regular basis?**
- **Can you sort out a babysitter now?**
- **Is there a volunteer service you could use when you feel overburdened?** (see services on the last pages)

**Important:** Even if you feel guilty when you take time out, try to hold on and practise carving out moments and times when it's just about you. With each time, you will feel less guilty and you will see that afterwards you will have much more strength to be the parent you want to be.





## Relationship and sexuality

Surely a lot has changed in your lives in the last few months. Not only the new daily routine with your baby, but also between you as a couple.

Is there hardly any time together anymore, e.g. walks, relaxing movie nights, tenderness and sex?

Rest assured: Many couples feel this way and you are not alone. It's not unusual to have to rediscover your feelings for each other and even your sexuality. Try to have compassion for each other and your situation.

**Dear mum**, are you tired, not yet comfortable in your "new" body and perhaps longing for a break from all the physical closeness you are giving your baby? Many mums report the so-called "overtouched syndrome", an expression that means something like: "I want to have my body to myself again! I've had enough of physical closeness!"

Talk to your partner about it, because otherwise, they may feel rejected or hurt when you don't want to allow any closeness.

Try to be open to other forms of sexuality even if they are new for you. To fulfil the need for sexuality and increase desire, conversations about your wishes when it comes to sex, stroking and other forms of physical contact, and even just looking at each other in your daily life can do the trick. The desire for sexuality often only arises through action and appropriate preparation.

Talk about what you need to feel at ease during sex. A validating conversation, a romantic setting with candles, loving gestures - all of these can be part of your sexuality.

**Dear partner**, talk to each other about your thoughts and feelings. Sometimes, you might get jealous of the baby because your partner has little or no interest in sex or physical contact with you. It's important to talk about it and make it clear that physical contact makes you feel seen and loved.

Or on the contrary, you may not feel the need for closeness and physical contact. Suddenly you only perceive your wife or girlfriend as a mother and can't connect with her sexually? Ask yourself why you seem to have lost your desire. Speak with each other without accusations. Understanding and validating each other.



### Practical tip

Dating time for you as a couple

**"A date? But who's supposed to look after our child in the meantime? No, that's not possible!"**

It doesn't have to be! Because on your date, your child can stay with you. Just make time for just the two of you once a week. Once your child is asleep, light a candle, put your phones away and treat yourselves to little snacks and tasty drinks. Go into dialogue with each other. Each of you gets a designated speaking time that's not to be interrupted. You can talk about your feelings, your needs and wishes and maybe you can agree on a common goal or wish.

Here are some examples:

- Cooking together
- Taking a shower together, to become closer again
- Some me-time for Mum or the partner
- How can you support each other with the housework?
- Try to arrange a cosy "couple's spot" at home, i.e. with candles, a comfortable place to lie down and some cushions. This place may even be in the children's room, which isn't in use yet. At this place you can meet to have nice conversations, sex or snuggle up.

# GETTING BACK TO WORK

Mothers often not only feel the desire for personal freedom, to meet friends again, go to the gym or read a book in peace, but also an increasing urge to return to work.

Contact with customers and colleagues fulfils numerous needs, such as appreciation, recognition, self-efficacy, further development, etc. It may be possible to take on a post as holiday replacement or work part-time during parental leave. Your partner may also want to adapt their parental leave plans to suit your return to work. Talk it through with each other as well as your employers.

## Doubts about returning to work

What if, going against your earlier plans, you can't imagine returning to work any time soon? It's very possible that much has changed since the baby arrived, and you experience motherhood as completely fulfilling. Clarify two aspects in particular with yourself and your partner, and then contact your employer if need be:

- **The financial aspect:** Is it necessary to go back to work, because you had already budgeted your salary or because you are a single parent?
- **Your happiness:** Maybe you would prefer another job? A great side effect of parental leave can be to reflect on your previous career - and try something completely new.

## Parental leave for the other parent

Have you, as the other parent, asked for parental leave? If not, ask yourself if this decision still feels like the right one for you. Please evaluate as a couple whether parental leave would actually be a relief and an asset for your family.

According to the law, you must ask for parental leave seven weeks in advance. Talk to your partner about their wishes and then contact the employer.



# TRIPS, VISITS AND HOLIDAYS WITH BABY



Do you sometimes long for having a little more adventure and freedom in your life again? No wonder. Life with child is a shift. Spontaneous activities have become challenging - and now and again you may wish for the simplicity of the past.

Maybe you even ask yourself if you're overwhelming your baby with trips, holidays and visits from relatives or friends. Nobody can make the decision "Trips and holidays with baby - yes or no?" for you. However, when the circumstances feel right and you have a good feeling about it, there's no reason not to try.

**By the way:** You don't need to travel far to see new things and recharge your batteries. Even the local park or city forest can be magical places if you choose them for more than just the usual walk. Why not set out in the evening? We may be able to see less in the twilight, but our ears will perceive even more, such as animal sounds. And even rain has its charm, because then we smell a lot of things more strongly. What's true for adults, also applies to babies. Anyone who has tried it knows: You come home "differently" from such an "adventure".

**Caution:** Your baby absolutely needs UV-protective headgear, e.g. a summer hat made of light material or a peaked cap. Make sure there is enough shadow. Naturally, it's just as important that your baby is warm enough in winter. Always make sure that your baby is neither too warm nor too cold.



## Tips and tricks ... for a time-out with baby

- Don't forget anything important! Make a checklist for trips or holidays!
- When travelling long distances by car, it's important to take plenty of breaks. Take a blanket with you and have a short picnic, for example, so that your baby can stretch out.
- It's okay for children to lie in an infant carrier for a longer period of time. It's not every day that there are long car journeys with a child. Exceptions are allowed.
- If you are visiting family or friends abroad and travelling by plane, find out in advance from the airline or a travel agency what you need to keep in mind when flying with a baby.
- When it's warm outside: Run barefoot across a meadow. You can also show your baby what it feels like to have the soles of their feet gently tickled by grass.
- Take a picnic with you. Even in the colder time of the year, it can be fun to be someplace nice with a thermos flask, biscuits and dip (or something similar).



## Good to know: Financial support

If you need financial support, the State of Berlin arranges for recreational and family holidays. There are also non-profit family holiday centres and inexpensive family trips. You will find offers on the last pages of this ElternMail.

# YOUR BABY'S DEVELOPMENT

During this stage, your baby is very curious and would love to explore the whole world. During this developmental stage, they mainly explore their environment with their mouth (oral phase). They put everything they can grab into their mouths. Your baby reacts to your facial expressions and gestures and tries to imitate you. They begin to express their own joy and anger. At the same time, it's a great adventure for your baby and for you as a mum and dad to experience how your baby explores their big-small world with all their senses. That's why your baby is also very attached in other moments. The so-called attachment system becomes active again when your baby seeks a lot of closeness.

## Movement - Hearing - Sight - Speech

### How your baby moves - motor development

Between 4.5 and 6 months, your baby usually starts turning from the supine to the prone position.

The child turns their head towards an object they want to reach, reaches over the centre of their body for the first time while keeping their legs in the air, and then turns around. Although they can turn from both sides onto their tummy, they are only able to turn back from their tummy onto their back at around 8 months.

This can be very stressful for parents, as your baby is constantly turning from their back to their tummy, but quickly runs out of energy in the prone position and becomes unhappy.

If you then turn your baby onto their back, they will quickly turn onto their tummy again and the "game" starts all over again.

Be patient with your baby's frustration, wait a while, because your baby's dissatisfaction will also lead to further development, and offer them alternatives such as carrying, prams, etc.

**Caution:** Still, please never leave your baby unattended on elevated surfaces such as the changing table, sofa or edge of the bed and always keep a protective hand on your child.

Your baby can now grasp, rearrange and pack objects back and forth with confidence.

Are you eagerly awaiting crawling? Infants as young as 6 months rarely make their first attempts at crawling. Most children don't start crawling until they are 8 months old. More on this in the next ElternMail.

### This is how your baby talks

The second babbling phase begins! Now syllables such as "dadada", "papapa" or "mamama" are being linked more and more consciously. The children adapt to the intonation pattern of the surrounding speech and practise only the sounds of their mother tongue now. Differences between children with normal hearing and those with hearing loss are now also becoming apparent - children with hearing loss fall silent during this developmental phase. If you feel unsure whether your baby is hearing well or not, don't hesitate to make an appointment with your paediatrician.

### This is how you can support the language development

- Babies from an early age enjoy it when the people talking take turns. Have „babbling conversations“ by imitating their babbling or perhaps trying out new syllable chains. Take a break, look at your baby and say: "Now you!"
- Speak at a higher pitch. If possible, use a dulcet speech melody, i.e. a kind of „singsong in speech“, and use expressive facial cues (an exaggerated facial expression).
- Use language to accompany what you are doing and what the baby is doing, such as nappy changing, dressing, breastfeeding, washing - describe what you and your baby are doing.
- Look at picture books and tell your baby what you see.



### Fun hack

If it feels weird to be talking by yourself:

Let a doll or plush toy talk to your baby. This "character" can take one look at you and another at your baby and ask questions, for example: "Where is your nose?" Small voice changes are ok and funny.

### What your baby can already hear

At 5 or 6 months, your baby can draw attention to themselves by using their voice very loudly by babbling or squeaking. Maybe you're already observing that your child reacts to distant noises. For example, when someone rings the doorbell, the phone rings or a car honks. From time to time, your baby may seem unsure or even anxious when hearing an unfamiliar sound. These kinds of sounds can be frightening for children. Give your child reassurance in such a situation and tell them what the noise was.

### What your baby can see and perceive

For us adults, the following processes are normal: When I throw a ball, it will fall down. When I put an object under a blanket, it's not gone forever, I can retrieve the object from underneath.

We can perceive and understand all these events that are happening around us. However, our children can't yet understand that an object under a blanket is not gone forever. The object is either there or isn't. From month 4 to 5, your baby slowly learns that if A happens, B might be the consequence.



### This is how you can support your baby in their development

- Let your baby play during waking times. Offer game opportunities that your child can enjoy with all senses.
- Important: Give your baby your undivided attention again and again and put your mobile phone aside during this time, for example.
- Allow yourself short breaks, for example when your baby is happily occupied. Your baby doesn't need to be entertained all the time!
- Maybe there are parent-child-groups near you. They are open to all families. There, you can interact with other mothers and fathers and your child can get into contact with other children. From month 4 or 5, you can also try out baby swimming as a beautiful activity for your child.
- Make sure that your child can roam freely. It's better to make use of the waking times on a blanket or in good weather on a meadow than in the pram, in the sling or in the baby carrier.
- Children enjoy finger games or songs that involve a lot of clapping.
- Provide your child with materials to build towers. Stacking towers or cups are good for this.
- Take advantage of valuable courses such as PEKiP, Pikler, Delfi or baby swimming (see references on the last pages for more information). You may also get to know other parents who have children of the same age and with whom an exchange or meeting can provide new perspectives.



# CLOSENESS - PERSONAL FREEDOM - CHILD-FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENT

Up until recently, your baby spent most of the day close to you or on you. They were being snuggled, carried or you went on walks with the stroller. Now, your baby wants to move more and more and is exhibiting the so-called exploration behaviour, i.e. your child explores their environment on their own.

Your baby will detach from you in small “steps”. They’ll want to explore the world, investigate the skirting board and discover toys on their own.

What does your child need to master the first detachment process? A close attachment figure like you as mum, dad or another close person who gives and conveys a sense of trust and security: “Discover the world. I’m here when you need me.” Your baby will have the confidence to move away from you if they know that they’ll not be left alone and that they can crawl back to their safe haven immediately if they feel unsure. It’s therefore important that you take the time and patience to observe your baby, accompany them and show that you are there when they need you.

It’s important that children are given the opportunity to explore their surroundings in order to gain experience. For example, if your baby discovers a small step and wants to crawl down it, it might not be easy for you to let it happen, as parents quickly see dangers. However, in order to develop self-confidence, self-assurance and an appreciation of their own physical abilities, it’s important that children are allowed to try to overcome small hurdles themselves. Naturally, as an important attachment figure, be close to your child in such situations in order to intervene if necessary.

## That’s what your baby would say:

“I want to belong and become active myself.”

“I perceive what is happening around me.”

“Everything is new to me. I am curious to get to know myself and the world.”

“I need you - I need security and nurturing and the freedom to explore.”



## Tips and tricks

... for a “Yes-environment”

Make sure that your home is a so-called **“yes environment”** for your baby. For example, are there decorations, plants or other objects that your child could knock over? Then put them on top. Do they have access to materials that are not suitable for children through drawers, cupboards, etc.? Then remove those materials and put toys in instead - children love opening cupboard doors. Or lock the cupboard doors so that your child can’t open them.

### Why is a yes-environment important?

So that Babies can roam freely and test their limits without hurting themselves.





# SAFETY IN FLAT AND HOUSE

At 5 or 6 months, your baby will get ever more agile and the interest in lying on the crawling blanket will slowly diminish. Instead, your baby will gradually want to explore their surroundings. This means that there are a few things to consider now to ensure that your baby remains unharmed.

- **Be careful on the changing table or other high pieces of furniture**

Your baby may already be turning and there is a risk that they could fall off. Therefore, never leave your child unattended on the changing table, a sofa or the parent/family bed. Always have one hand on your child if, for example, you want to take something out of the changing table drawer and have to bend down to do so.

- **Socket safety**

Make sure that all sockets are protected with a protective cover. You can buy socket covers at a DIY store or drugstore, for example. The safest safety covers are not the self-adhesive ones, but those that are screwed in.

- **Stair gates**

If there are stairs in your flat or house, attach a stair gate so that your child can't fall down high steps.

- **Dangerous objects**

You may notice that your baby wants to grab more and more and is interested in their surroundings. Make sure that there are no sharp objects, open creams etc. near your baby. Also, please check whether any plants in your home are poisonous and remove them from your child's reach. On the last pages you will find the contact details of the poison emergency hotline.

- **Pets**

Cats and dogs, for example, are often interesting for children. Now that they have learnt how to move, they can also crawl after the animals. Your child should be guided in dealing with pets so that they learn how to treat them with love. Children shouldn't be left alone with animals, as there is a risk that the animals could injure the children or vice versa.

- **Pram**

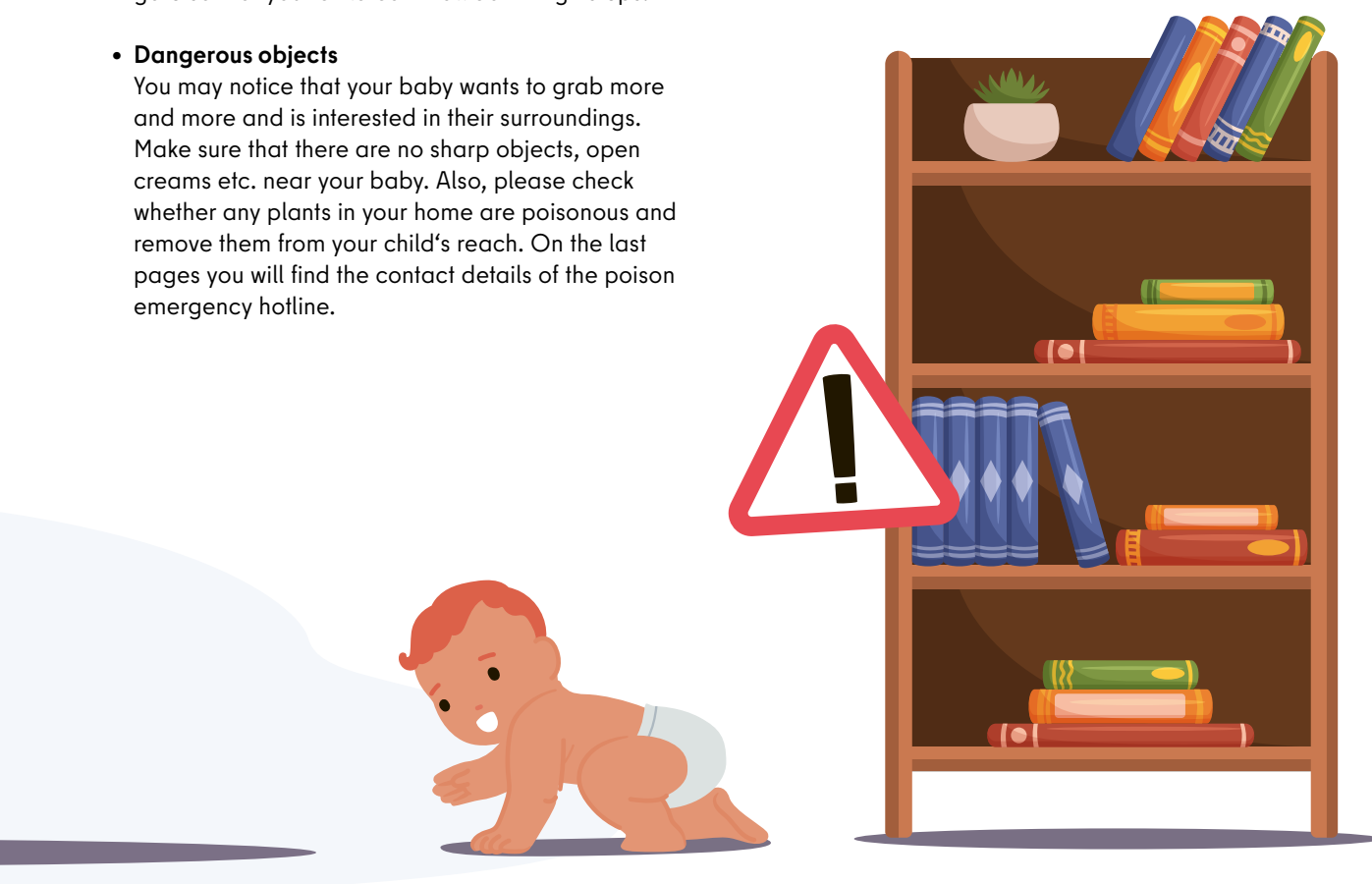
Please buckle your baby into the pram.

- **Curtains / drapes / tablecloths**

Check curtains and drapes for stability and don't use tablecloths. Babies love to pull at these.

- **Secure the furniture**

Make sure that all furniture is securely fastened to the wall so that it can't fall onto your child. Of course, this also applies to heavy objects such as books that could slide off a shelf.



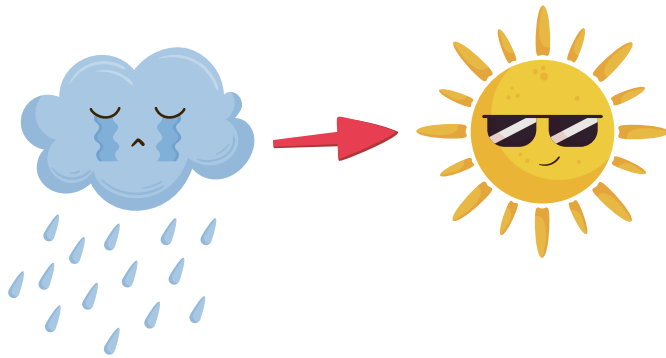
# THE 4<sup>TH</sup> AND 5<sup>TH</sup> DEVELOPMENT SPURT

Another exciting and emotional time lies ahead of your baby. The 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> spurts are often very challenging and exhausting. A lot of growth is happening in your child's brain.

Many mums and dads feel very nervous about developmental spurts and perhaps even a little afraid of them.

Please allow yourself to focus on the positive.

As the saying goes: Every cloud has a silver lining.



## The developmental spurt - week 19

**Start:** Usually around week 14 or 15

**End:** Usually around week 19 to 20

**Length:** About 4 to 6 weeks.  
The peak is around the 19<sup>th</sup> week.

## The developmental spurt - week 25

**Start:** Usually around week 22 to 23

**End:** Usually around week 23

**Length:** About four weeks. The peak is around the 26<sup>th</sup> week, so more towards the end of the spurt.



### Don't miss out!

Register for the ElternMail starting at month 7 months of age (see last page).  
(Deutsch / English / українська / Türkçe / العربية)



## How do you recognize development spurts?

### • Restlessness and sleep problems

There is a lot going on in your baby's brain as they want to learn more and more. As a result, your child may find it harder to sleep, wake up more often and be more unbalanced than you know your baby to be.

### • Increased crying

During this time, you may notice that your baby cries more often, needs a lot of closeness from you and may also be angry.

### • More or less appetite

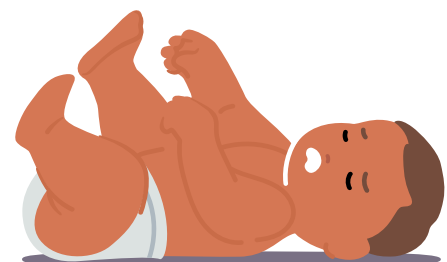
Don't worry if your baby is hungrier than usual during this phase or wants to eat less. Perhaps you know from experience that you are more or less hungry in stressful situations. It can happen that your baby refuses complementary food - stay calm and feed more milk again. It's a phase and it'll pass! If you are breastfeeding, simply latch on more often and your milk production will increase again.

### • Digestive issues

Constipation, diarrhoea, flatulence or abdominal pain, for example, can occur. The brain has a major influence on the gut, which can react irritably to emotional upheaval.

### • Clinginess, separation anxiety

Does your baby constantly want to be in your arms and you aren't allowed to leave the room? This is also a typical sign because now your baby needs more closeness and security.



# STRESSFUL PHASES

## This can help you as a couple during stressful phases

Realise what you are going through. In the hustle and bustle of everyday life, there is less time for calm, (clarifying) conversations. In addition, you may find that you are often sleep-deprived and therefore more irritable.

Some couples find it helps to “change location”. As soon as the tone becomes sharper, one of you suggests changing the setting. From the kitchen to the living room, for example. Or: from the living room out into the street, perhaps for a short walk. Sounds crazy, but the mood is often suddenly completely different somewhere else. Less strained. Only leave the flat with the baby, of course, or when someone else is looking after your baby.

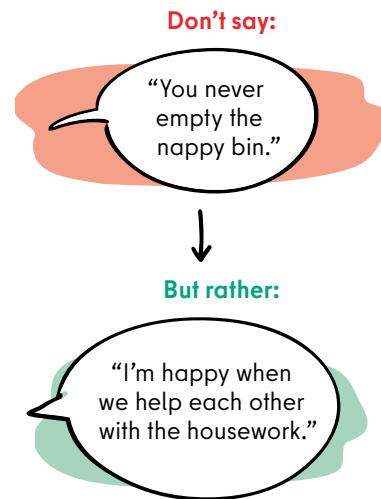
## If you are a single parent

You’re alone with the baby? Then talk to a good friend, your parents, grandparents or a neighbour you trust about your current situation. Ask for help - without feeling bad or even thoughts like “I’m a bad mother / a bad father”.

If you can entrust your child to someone close to you, then do so and accept the help. Let the two of them go for a short walk, even if it’s only 30 minutes. You can take a break! You need a break! It’s okay. If you don’t have anyone by your side, find out about help and support. You can find support services on the last few pages.

### Another trick to alleviate tension:

Instead of emphasising what is bothering you, put a positive spin on it.



# YOUR BABY'S SLEEP

## Your baby's need for sleep

- Your baby can be awake for 2-3 hours at a time during the day.
- Your child can be awake for about 3 hours before evening bedtime.
- During the day, your baby will sleep 3-4 times for about 2-4 hours.
- Your baby needs approx. 1-2 bottles / feeds during the night.
- Your child will sleep for around 14-15 hours in total and 11-12 hours at night.

**Important:** This information is intended as a general reference. Every child has their own individual sleep requirements.

### My baby won't lie down - what can I do?

Babies need a lot of sleep - and most of them love to doze off in their parents' arms. However, many babies wake up as soon as you try to put them down. Find out below why this may be the case and how you can put your baby down more easily.

- Seeking physical contact is completely natural for babies.
- The closeness of their caregivers makes them feel safe - so they can wonderfully relax.
- Babies spend a lot of time in light sleep and then often unconsciously check whether the situation is still as it was when they fell asleep.
- When they are laid down during light sleeping phases, they feel the change and wake up quickly because they realise that something is different. This makes them cry because they have been startled by being laid down and it's no longer as cosy as before.
- Oftentimes, this also has to do with developmental spurts when babies suddenly can no longer be laid down, even though it always worked wonderfully before. That's why the key is to be patient and loving.



## Tips and tricks

... how laying your baby down can work

### Tip No. 1:

#### Choose the right moment for laying them down

The most important thing is that you get a feel for when your baby is in a light sleep phase. As long as your baby is moving, twitching their eyes, making faces and so on, they are still in a light phase of sleep and it's better to wait before laying them down. Once your baby goes into deep sleep, they will feel "heavy", hardly move and have calm facial expressions. Only then should you try to slowly lay them down.

### Tip No. 2:

#### The best way to lay your baby down

Laying your baby down on their side works best, with your baby's feet touching the mattress first, then their legs, hips, upper body and then slowly laying them on their back and keeping your hand on their body for a while. After one or two minutes, slowly release your hand and stay in the room for a while so that you can react quickly if the baby becomes uneasy. If your baby "calls", it's a good idea to go to the bed as quickly as possible to see if you can soothe your child through hand contact in their bed. If not, pick them up briefly until they calm down again and see if you can then carefully put them down as described.

# YOUR BABY'S DIET



At the earliest at the beginning of the 5<sup>th</sup> month and at the latest at the beginning of the 7<sup>th</sup> month, your baby can start to eat baby food.

## How to recognise whether your baby is ready for complementary food

Your baby can turn from their back to their tummy. They're still hungry after milk or will come back after a short time.

The tongue extension reflex that your baby needs to suckle (forwards and backwards) has regressed and they can also move their tongue sideways. They no longer push the food out with their tongue.

Your baby looks curiously at your plate and seems to want to eat the same thing as you. This can be a clue, but it doesn't have to be. Babies are wonderful "copycats". They want to do what others do.

## Cook pap yourself or buy it in a jar?

Generally speaking, pap recipes are simple and not difficult to make. It's also usually cheaper than buying ready-made jars. You can also decide for yourself which ingredients the pap should contain. Your baby gets to know different flavours early on with homemade complementary foods. Of course, there's nothing wrong with jars if you can't or don't want to cook yourself, are in a hurry or have to feed on the go. You will find links to recipe ideas on the last pages.

The complementary feeding phase usually lasts until the end of the first year of life. If you don't want to feed pap or your baby doesn't like pap, you can also try the baby led weaning method from the beginning of the 6<sup>th</sup> month.

## Baby Led Weaning - in short: BLW

BLW is a different method of getting a baby used to solid foods than the classic pap. The phrase means "weaning lead by the baby" and refers to the so-called pap-free complementary feeding method. With this method, the baby has a hand in what and how much they eat. "Hand" is meant literally here.

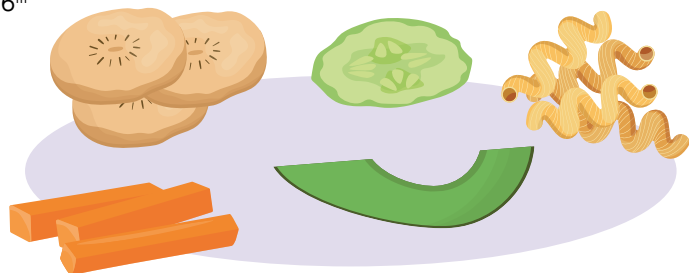
### Important requirements for BLW

- A starting point for BLW is that your baby should be able to hold things such as toys in their hand and bring them to their mouth.
- Your baby can feed themselves and doesn't need a spoon or fork at first.
- Your baby can grasp something with their thumb and index finger (tweezer grip) and can therefore put smaller pieces of food in their mouth.
- At the same time, the baby continues to be breastfed or bottle-fed (as with pap).

Suitable foods to start with include peeled and pre-cooked pear or apple pieces, pre-cooked carrot, pumpkin or zucchini pieces and boiled potato pieces. Make sure that your baby's food isn't salty or greasy.

### The advantages of BLW

The advantages of this method are plentiful. The baby has the chance to explore the food with all their senses right from the start (texture, smell, taste, colour, shape). They can eat "like the grown-ups" at the table. In addition, the baby can decide for themselves what and how much they want to eat. Another advantage is that BLW promotes oral and hand motor skills.



# THE FIRST TEETH APPEAR

At the age of 6–8 months, the first teeth start to appear. The two middle incisors are usually the first to show.



## Good to know

### The primary dentition

A primary dentition has 20 teeth and is complete at the age of 2.5 to 3 years.

### How does your child feel when teething?

- Reddened and swollen gums can occur.
- Children are often more restless and cry more due to the pain.
- From time to time, your child may also have a slightly elevated temperature.
- Your child may drool more and put their fingers in their mouth more often.

## When do which teeth come in?

Wondering when which teeth come in? Here we have a clear chart for you.

There are also apps to log when the next tooth appears. A great reminder!

### This is what you can do

- A cooled teething ring can relieve the pain somewhat. You can buy teething rings at drugstores, among other places. Simply put them in the fridge.
- There are gels that have an analgesic effect. Ask at the pharmacy or your paediatrician.
- A wet cloth to chew on can have a very calming effect.
- Many babies like a gentle massage of the teething area. Make sure your hands are clean and then massage your baby's teething area.

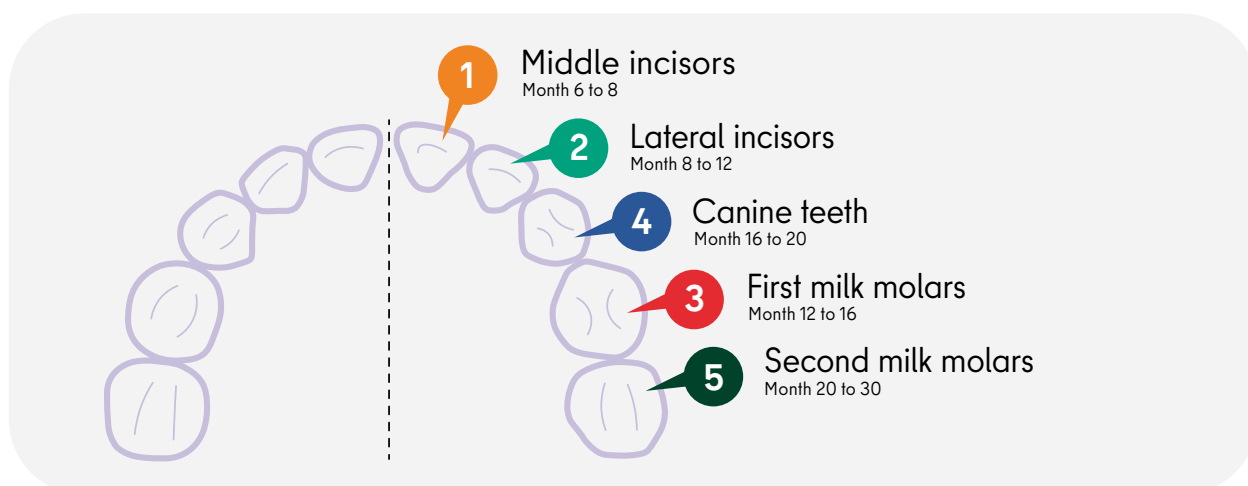
**Important to know:** However, it's not recommended that babies are given chilled food or wear an amber necklace to help relieve the pain. There is too great a risk that your baby will choke or be injured by the necklace.

### Caring for milk teeth

You can already brush your baby's first teeth once a day. Use a soft toothbrush for this. There are also so-called thimble toothbrushes made of silicone. The thimble has soft bristles and can be placed over the parent's index finger. This allows the first teeth to be brushed gently. Your child will slowly get used to the importance of brushing their teeth. You can also make an appointment with a dentist. They'll give you important information about which toothpaste is suitable for your child and the best way to brush their teeth. This will get your child used to visiting a dentist at an early age.

## Tip for you

Use a baby toothbrush with an oval handle to brush the teeth. Your baby can hold it and also use it as a teething ring.



# YOUR BABY'S HEALTH

## The U5 examination - key information

Between months 6 and 7, the U5 takes place at your paediatrician's office.

During the check-up, this will be checked and noted in the yellow U-booklet:

- The measurement of height and weight.
- Your baby's head circumference will be measured.
- Your baby's movements will be looked at:
  - Is your baby already starting to roll over?
  - Can they support themselves on their stomach with their hands?
  - Are they reaching for objects?
- Checking the organs
- Your baby's ability to see and hear will be tested.

It's important that you remember to bring your child's vaccination booklet. This way it can be checked whether all the necessary vaccinations have taken place or whether certain vaccinations should still be administered. It's also important to note that you as the mother, you as the father or you as the parents can decide which vaccinations your child receives and which not.

In Germany, an independent body of experts, the Standing Committee on Vaccination (STIKO), recommends which vaccinations are advisable at which age in order to protect against dangerous infectious diseases.

## U-examination for babies and children

- U2 day 3 to 10
- U3 week 4 to 5
- U4 month 3 to 4
- U5 month 6 to 7**
- U6 month 10 to 12
- U7 month 21 to 24
- U7a month 34 to 36
- U8 month 46 to 48
- U9 month 60 to 64



### Don't miss out!

Register for the ElternMail starting at month 7 months of age (see last page).

(Deutsch / English / українська / Türkçe / العربية)



## Preventive check-up with your dentist

In addition to the U5 at the paediatrician, you can also have the UZ 1 to UZ 6 done with your baby at a (paediatric) dentist. This means that your child's teeth are checked once a year from the age of 1 to the age of 6. This way, your baby can get used to visits to the dentist and you will receive all the information about what is important for maintaining proper oral hygiene.





# WHEN YOUR BABY GETS SICK



It's heartbreaking for parents when their baby is in pain. Whether it's a little cold that makes sleeping difficult, a cough or a fever. No matter what ails our children, you naturally want to help as quickly as possible. Nevertheless, regular infections are actually important for your baby, as they build up and strengthen the immune system.

## Important facts about fever

A baby's body temperature is between 36 and 37.5 degrees Celsius.

A slightly elevated temperature is when the temperature rises to 38 degrees. Anything above this is referred to as a fever and from 39 degrees on it is called a high fever.

### Why fever isn't a bad thing

- A fever is a defence reaction of the body.
- The increased temperature helps your baby fight off viruses and bacteria.
- A fever helps your baby to get better.

**Important:** Ask your paediatrician how you can react once your baby has a fever or febrile convulsions.

### This is what you can do

An elevated temperature doesn't have to be brought down with medication immediately. Keep a close eye on your baby and allow them to take a temperature under supervision. Make sure your baby wears light cotton clothing and avoid clothes that can cause heat build-up. Offer your child regular fluids such as water, unsweetened tea or, if you are still breastfeeding, breast milk. It's okay to breastfeed your child more often than usual during a fever.

**Attention:** If your baby's general condition worsens, you notice that they are breathing heavily or show other symptoms of illness, go to the emergency room or a paediatrician immediately, especially if the fever lasts longer than three days.

**Dear mum, dear dad,** if you feel overwhelmed or unsure, even if the fever isn't that high, seek medical advice. A sick child is something completely new for you and you can get all the reassurance you need. Have the confidence to ask for help.

If you're ill yourself, you can make use of paediatric nursing and family care. There's also an emergency mother's service that is paid for by health insurance. You can find references to this on the last pages.

## Important facts about the common cold

One of the most common childhood illnesses is the common cold. 8 - 12 infections a year are normal and allowed. This means that your child will have about one cold a month. During a cold, your baby may be more restless and unhappy. You might observe reddened eyes and a congested nose. A lot of closeness to mum, dad or another trusted caregiver can help. It often takes about a week for your baby to recover from a cold. If the blocked nose is accompanied by a cough and fever, have your baby examined by your paediatrician.

### This is what can help with a congested nose

- Breastfeeding mothers can give their baby a drop of breast milk into the nose.
- You can administer a saline solution (ready-made products can be bought at the pharmacy) into your baby's nose, e.g. using a pipette.
- You can try gently massaging your baby's breast.
- Chop up an onion and place it on a plate near the baby's cot.
- Humidify the air with wet towels, bowls of water or similar.

**Caution:** Refrain from mixing additives into the water (e.g. essential oils) and make sure that the hot water bowl can't tip over. Danger of scalding!

### How to strengthen your baby's immune system

- A healthy diet
- Plenty of hydration (important: preferably water, breast milk and unsweetened teas)
- Fresh air
- Exercise
- Playing and having fun
- Enough and regular sleep
- Snuggling and physical closeness
- Relaxation and quiet

# SUPPORT SERVICES IN BERLIN



## **Berlin family platform**

On the Berlin family platform (Familienportal) you will find a wealth of valuable service information on the topic of family, a calendar of events for children, young people and the entire family, as well as guides on a wide range of topics (e.g. leisure, finances, single parenthood, daycare centres, etc.).

← [www.berlin.de/familie](http://www.berlin.de/familie)



## **Family holidays**

The State of Berlin facilitates recreational and family holidays for families with a low income or special burdens. Further information on non-profit family holiday centres (Familienferienstätten) or low-cost family trips can be found here:

← [www.berlin.de/familie/informationen/familienerholung-angebote-und-foerderung-236](http://www.berlin.de/familie/informationen/familienerholung-angebote-und-foerderung-236)



← <https://dfv-berlin.de/familienerholung>



← <https://bag-familienerholung.de>



## **Financial aid for course fees**

A range of benefits from the education package (Bildungspaket, education and participation, also known as BuT) promote participation in school and leisure activities for children and young people from families with low income. This also includes a monthly amount that can be used for baby swimming or baby massage.

← <https://familienportal.de/familienportal/familienleistungen/bildung-und-teilhabe>



## **Family centres**

Berlin's family centres (Familienzentren) offer open groups, courses and counselling. Single parents, separated parents or single-parent families can also find special offers there. Here, or in neighbourhood houses and district centres (Nachbarschaftshäusern and Stadtteilzentren), you can find information about various parent-baby courses such as PEKiP, Pikler, Delfi or baby swimming.

← [www.berliner-familienzentren.de](http://www.berliner-familienzentren.de)



← [www.berlin.de/familie/informationen/nachbarschaftshaeuser-und-stadtteilzentren-127](http://www.berlin.de/familie/informationen/nachbarschaftshaeuser-und-stadtteilzentren-127)



There are also specialised family centres for LGBTQIA\* families in Berlin:

← [www.berlin.de/familie/informationen/regenbogenfamilien-343](http://www.berlin.de/familie/informationen/regenbogenfamilien-343)



... and services for fathers

← [www.berlin.de/familie/informationen/beratung-von-vaetern](http://www.berlin.de/familie/informationen/beratung-von-vaetern)

# SUPPORT SERVICES IN BERLIN



## Relief - volunteer services

Volunteer services such as “wellcome - practical help after birth” (wellcome - Praktische Hilfe nach der Geburt) or “Kangaroo helps and guides” (Känguru hilft und begleitet, “Into life as strong as a bear” (bärenstark ins Leben), the grandparent service and more can provide relaxation and relief to everyday life with child(ren).

← [www.berlin.de/sen/jugend/familie-und-kinder/familienfoerderung/netzwerk-fruehe-hilfen](http://www.berlin.de/sen/jugend/familie-und-kinder/familienfoerderung/netzwerk-fruehe-hilfen)



## Assistance in case you get sick yourself: Family care (Familienpflege) and emergency maternity service (Notmütterdienst)

Family care offers practical support in emergency situations for families with children under the age of 12 or for high-risk pregnant women. Funding and applications are possible via the statutory health insurance (gesetzliche Krankenkasse), the pension insurance provider (Rentenversicherungsträger) or, in the event of rejection, via the Youth Welfare Office (Jugendamt).

← <https://kinderversorgungsnetz-berlin.de/familienpflege-0>



## Families in times of need

Sometimes, illnesses can also lead to financial hardship. In this case, you can turn to the “Help for families” (Hilfe für die Familie) foundation.

← [www.stiftunghilfe.de](http://www.stiftunghilfe.de)



The family service offices (Familienservicebüros) also offer basic social counselling.

← [www.berlin.de/familie/informationen/familienservicebueros-350](http://www.berlin.de/familie/informationen/familienservicebueros-350)



## Questions about health - KJGD, paediatricians online

If you have any questions about health and child development, the child and youth health services (KJGD) in the districts are the contacts to go to.

← <https://kinderversorgungsnetz-berlin.de/gesundheitsamt>



← [www.kindergesundheit-info.de](http://www.kindergesundheit-info.de)



The paediatricians online (Kinderärzte im Netz) also provide information and answer questions about children’s health.

← [www.kinderaerzte-im-netz.de](http://www.kinderaerzte-im-netz.de)



#### **In case of symptoms of poisoning**

The Charité poison hotline (Giftnotruf) is available 24 hours a day on 030 192 40 for free emergency counselling. In life-threatening situations, please call the general emergency number 112 immediately! You can find more information about the poison hotline here:

← <https://giftnotruf.charite.de>



**The poisoning accidents in children (Vergiftungsunfälle bei Kindern) app** from the Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (Bundesinstitut für Risikobewertung) always connects you to the local poison hotline.

← [www.bfr.bund.de/de/apps\\_vergiftungsunfaelle.html](http://www.bfr.bund.de/de/apps_vergiftungsunfaelle.html)



#### **Other important contacts in emergencies / crises**

Medical on-call service (Ärztlicher Bereitschaftsdienst):

← [www.116117.de/de/aerztlicher-bereitschaftsdienst.php](http://www.116117.de/de/aerztlicher-bereitschaftsdienst.php)



Berlin Crisis Service

← [www.berliner-krisendienst.de](http://www.berliner-krisendienst.de)

Child protection hotline (Kinderschutz-Hotline)

Tel: 61 00 66

Number against sorrow (Nummer gegen Kummer) / parents' line (Elterntelefon):

Tel: 0800 111 0 550



Church telephone counselling (Telefon-Seelsorge der Kirchen)

Tel: 0800-111 0 111 und 0800 111 0 222

Help hotline "Violence against women" Gewalt an Frauen)

Tel: 116 016 or

← [www.hilfetelefon.de](http://www.hilfetelefon.de)



#### **Cook your own baby food**

You can find recipe ideas here, for example:

← [www.bmel.de/SharedDocs/Downloads/DE/Broschueren/das-beste-essen-fuer-babys.html](http://www.bmel.de/SharedDocs/Downloads/DE/Broschueren/das-beste-essen-fuer-babys.html)



or here:

← [www.kindergesundheit-info.de/themen/ernaehrung/alltagstipps/0-12-monate/brei-rezepte](http://www.kindergesundheit-info.de/themen/ernaehrung/alltagstipps/0-12-monate/brei-rezepte)



#### **Trips and going on walks**

You can find tips for trips and beautiful parks to go for a walk here:

← [www.berlin.de/tourismus/parks-und-gaerten](http://www.berlin.de/tourismus/parks-und-gaerten)



## WELL-SUPPORTED FROM THE BEGINNING

With **ElternMail Berlin**, the **Senate Department for Education, Youth and Family Affairs (Senatsverwaltung für Bildung, Jugend und Familie)** aims to support and strengthen all parents at the beginning of their family life and along the way. The service, which is free of charge for families, is designed to help mothers and fathers find useful information on all aspects of their child's development, as well as practical tips and information on local support services

### Preview of the next ElternMail - Month 7 to 9 of your baby's life

1. Learning to crawl and walk
2. Conflicts in the couple relationship
3. Media use in the family
4. Stranger and separation anxiety
5. Information about the daycare centre



**Don't miss out: Sign up now!**



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