

## What is a Well Baby Exam?

It is an exam that is done when your baby is healthy. This exam helps keep your baby healthy by preventing or finding and solving problems early. This helps them feel good and even helps them learn.

A well baby exam includes three things:

1. A health history
2. A physical exam
3. Immunizations and tests



## What Can You Do to Prepare for the Well Baby Exam?

- Talk to your baby about the exam so they know what to expect
- Bring your immunization (shot) record with you
- Bring toys or other items that will help your baby feel comfortable
- Bring a list of questions you'd like to ask the doctor or nurse practitioner

**Los Angeles County,  
Department of Public Health  
Child Health and Disability Prevention  
Program**

Phone: (800-993-2437)

Website:

[www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/cms/CHDP.htm](http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/cms/CHDP.htm)



# Well Baby Exam for Birth to 18 Months

## What to expect



## What Will You Find in this Booklet?

This booklet will help you understand what the doctor or nurse practitioner will do and look for during the well baby exam.

### Health History

The doctor or nurse practitioner may start the exam by asking questions that will help best meet your baby's health needs. They may ask questions about these topics:

- Your pregnancy
- Your baby's birth
- Your baby's diet
- Health problems in your family
- If anyone smokes around your baby

You can ask questions at any time during this visit.



## Physical Exam

The doctor will start the physical exam after the health history. The physical exam has several parts:

### Growth and Development

This part helps see if your baby is growing properly. Your baby will be weighed and measured. Their head will be measured to check that their brain is growing right. Their skin will also be assessed.

### Whole Body

This part checks different parts of the body. The doctor will listen to their heartbeat and breathing. They will also touch the stomach and move the legs to check the hip joints. They will also tap their knee to see how their muscles and nerves are working.

### Vision

This part checks how well your baby can see. The doctor will check how well their eyes follow an object and respond to light.

### Hearing

This part checks for ear infections and hearing loss.

### Dental

This part checks your baby's tonsils, teeth, and gums. Putting babies to bed with a bottle can rot their teeth.

## Immunizations and Tests

After the physical exam, it is time for immunizations (shots) and other tests. The right shots depend on your baby's age. Ask your doctor what shots are right for your baby. Let them know if your baby has missed a shot so that your baby gets it now.

Based on the physical exam, your doctor may also want to run other tests, including:

- Anemia blood test
- Tuberculosis (TB) skin test
- Lead poisoning

Remember, you can ask questions at any time during this visit. You can ask anything, like why tests need to be done, what test results mean, and when should you bring your baby back.