

# 4 Month Check-Up

BECOMING SOCIAL

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Weight \_\_\_\_\_ lbs. \_\_\_\_\_ oz.

Age \_\_\_\_\_

Length \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Head Size \_\_\_\_\_

## DIET

Breast milk or iron-fortified infant formula is the best sources of nutrition for the first 4-6 months of your baby's life. If your baby is bottle feeding, you should not put the bottle in the baby's bed or prop it in your baby's mouth. Breast-fed infants should continue on a multivitamin with a 400 IU of vitamin D.

Between 4-6 months is the appropriate time to introduce solids.

Pay attention to feeding cues. When ready, your baby will show interest in and readiness for solids. Feeding should be a happy bonding time between you and your infant. Never force solid food. If solids are rejected, stop, wait a week or two and try again. Eating from a spoon is a learning process and may be slow-going at first.

Start with iron-fortified infant cereals. Rice or barley will least likely to cause allergies. Mix with breast milk or formula to make a thin milky mixture, then thicken as tolerated. Start with 1-2 tablespoons and work up to 1/2-1 cup per feeding. Start at 1 meal a day and build up to 3 meals a day over the next 2-3 months.

Once your baby accepts cereals, new food groups may be added. Infants seem to be more accepting of sweet fruit so starting with vegetables may encourage long term acceptance resulting in a more balanced diet. However, fruits and vegetables are equals in the nutritional food pyramid, so pick one that looks good and try it. Start a single food item and watch 5-7 days to make sure that your baby does not have a bad reaction to the new food. Reactions may include rash, fussiness, vomiting or diarrhea. It is natural for babies to initially reject a food and it may take offering the food 8-10 times before your infant will accept it.

## JUICE

Juice is a major source of calories and overuse is contributing to the epidemic of obesity in children. Even 100% natural juice is mostly sugar water, so we do not encourage the use of juice. If you decide to use juice, start after six months and limit to a total of 4-6 ounces per day. White grape is often a reasonable first try.

Some infants (up to 8%) develop food allergies or sensitivities. Foods that are more likely to cause reactions include milk, soy, eggs, wheat, nuts and fish.

In the past we recommended delay of introducing these foods. Research does not support that delaying these foods actually reduces the risk of your infant developing a food reaction. If your infant has a known food reaction or there is a family history of food reactions, be careful and pay close attention for problems as new foods are introduced.

Honey should be avoided during the first year of life as it may be contaminated with the deadly germ that can cause a life threatening paralysis called infant botulism.

## **DEVELOPMENT**

- Your baby is now becoming very social. He will draw you into play.
- Talk to him during dressing, bathing, feeding, playing and driving.
- Read to him.
- Play social games such as pat-a-cake, peek-a-boo and so big.
- Continue to put him to bed in a drowsy but awake state so that he can learn to settle himself to sleep.
- Your baby will chew on his hands or fingers as a way to get to know himself and his world.
- He will drool more now due to increased salivary activity. The first tooth usually appears around 6 months of age. If he is acting ill and has a rectal temperature higher than 100.5 degrees F, do not blame it on teething (refer to the "Fever" section in *Growing Up Healthy*).

Take time for yourself and spend time with your partner. Keep in contact with friends and family to avoid social isolation.

## **SAFETY/ACCIDENT PREVENTION**

- Always use an approved infant car seat facing backwards in the back seat.
- Do not allow anyone to smoke near your baby or in your home.
- Your baby will begin rolling over in the next few weeks. Never leave your baby on a table or elevated surface. She may wiggle enough to fall off and be injured.
- Never eat, drink or carry anything hot while near or carrying your baby.
- Keep cords, mobiles, and sharp objects out of reach. Snip cord loops that control window blinds.
- Your baby will put everything in his mouth. Be sure that all toys are nontoxic and have no little parts that can be pulled or chewed off.

**IMMUNIZATIONS**

Your child received the following:

Pediarix (DTaP, IPV, HBV)

Given/Not given

IPV

Given/Not given

HBV

Given/Not given

HIB

Given/Not given

RotaTeq

Given/Not given

Pneumococcal (PCV7)

Given/Not given

Other immunizations given today:

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**COMMENTS**

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