

Health and Wellness: 4 Months

Development

In the next 2 months, your baby may:

- react to strangers
- like to play
- pick up an object with one hand
- transfer objects from one hand to the other
- turn his or her head toward a voice
- make high-pitched squeals
- roll from his or her back to his or her tummy
- sit with support.

Feeding Tips

- Solid foods can be introduced when your baby is between 4 and 6 months old after talking to your baby's health care provider.
- Infant cereal should not be added to your baby's bottle.
- Never prop up a bottle to feed your baby.
- Do not give your baby fruit juice.
- Talk with your health care provider about giving your baby a vitamin D supplement.

Sleep

- The safest place for your baby to sleep is in your room in a crib or bassinet. Never use an adult bed, couch, sofa, or chair as a place for your baby to sleep.
 - Put your baby to sleep on his or her back, not on his or her stomach. This reduces the risk of your baby dying of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).

- Bed-sharing is not recommended. Do not let anyone sleep with your baby.
- The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends sharing a bedroom for at least the first 6 months, or preferably until your baby turns 1.
- Try to put your baby to sleep when he or she is awake. This will help your baby learn how to comfort himself or herself before falling asleep.
- Your baby may not need to be fed if he or she wakes up during the night.

Safety

- **Never shake or hit your baby.**
 - If you are losing control, take a few deep breaths, put your baby in a safe place and go into another room for a few minutes. If possible, have someone else watch your baby so you can take a break. Call a friend, your local Crisis Nursery or United Way at 651-291-0211 or dial 211.
- Use an approved car seat for the height and weight of your baby every time he or she rides in a vehicle. The car seat must be properly secured in the back seat.
 - The car seat should be rear-facing (facing the rear window) until your baby is at least 2 years old. Ideally, your baby should continue to be rear-facing until he or she passes the height and weight limits for his or her convertible (toddler) car seat.

(over)

- Car seat straps should fit snugly against your baby. Layer blankets or car seat covers over your baby for warmth. Snowsuits are not necessary.
- Keep your baby out of the sun. If you are outside, dress your baby in a hat, long-sleeved shirt and pants. Sunscreen can be used as needed.
- Your baby may be able to roll over. Never place your baby unattended on an elevated surface.
- Turn your water heater to its lowest setting (lower than 120 F).
- Your baby may drool a lot or put objects into his or her mouth. Keep all baby care products and small objects out of your baby's reach.
- Give your baby toys that he or she can shake, rattle and bang. This will help teach him or her cause and effect. Your baby does not need any electronics or screen time at this age.
- Do not let anyone smoke or vape in your house or car at any time. Smoke exposure can increase the number of respiratory or ear infections your baby gets. Chronic (long-lasting) smoke exposure damages developing lungs.
- Do not use infant walkers. They can cause serious accidents.
- Never place a string or necklace around your baby's neck due to the risk of strangulation. This also applies to attaching a pacifier to a string or cord.

Tummy Time

- Tummy time is an activity that keeps your baby from lying flat in one position.
- Tummy time can help prevent flat spots on the head and strengthen your baby's head and neck muscles. It can also strengthen the muscles your baby needs to roll, sit and crawl.

- The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends tummy time 2 to 3 times each day for short periods of time for newborns. This can be as little as 3 to 5 minutes. You should increase the amount of time as your baby gets older. The goal is to get up to 60 minutes of tummy time each day by 3 months old.
- Place your baby on his or her stomach when he or she is awake and someone is watching.
- Do not put your baby on a small pillow or other prop when he or she is sleeping. Your baby should be placed on his or her back to sleep.

What Your Baby Needs

- Give your baby lots of eye contact and talk, sing, and read to your baby often. This time should be free of television, texting and other distractions.
- Give your baby "tummy time" several times each day when he or she is awake.
- Soothe your baby when he or she cries. You cannot spoil your baby by holding or cuddling him or her.

Dental Care

- Clean your baby's mouth with a clean cloth and water.

Community and Health Information Resources

- **Healthy Children**
— healthychildren.org
- **Poison Control**
— 1-800-222-1222 or poison.org
- **Circle of Moms**
— wellness.allinahealth.org/events/41553

Minnesota

- **MinnesotaHelp.info®**
 - mnhelp.info
- **United Way**
 - 211unitedway.org
 - dial 211 or 651-291-0211
- **Women, Infants & Children (WIC) Program**
 - health.state.mn.us/wic
- **Early Childhood Family Education**
 - education.mn.gov/MDE/fam/elsprog/ECFE
- **Parent Aware**
 - parentaware.org
- **Help Me Grow**
 - helpmegrowmn.org

Wisconsin

- **211 Wisconsin**
 - 211wisconsin.communityos.org
 - dial 211 or 1-877-947-2211
- **Women, Infants & Children (WIC) Program**
 - dhs.wisconsin.gov/wic
- **Early Childhood Family Education**
 - dpi.wi.gov/early-childhood
- **Child Aware of America (Wisconsin)**
 - childcareaware.org/state/wisconsin
- **Birth to 3 Program**
 - dhs.wisconsin.gov/birthto3

Your Baby's Next Well Checkup

- Your baby's next well checkup will be at 6 months.
- Your baby may need these vaccinations:
 - DTaP (diphtheria, tetanus and acellular pertussis)
 - HepB (hepatitis B)
 - IPV (inactivated poliovirus vaccine)
 - PCV13 (pneumococcal conjugate vaccine, 13-valent)
 - influenza.

Information about the Vaccines For Children (VFC) program is available if your child is eligible for the program. VFC is a federally funded program that offers vaccines at no cost.

Talk with your health care provider about giving acetaminophen (Tylenol®) after your baby's immunizations.