



What You Need to Know: 4 Months Old

Feeding and Nutrition

- At 4 months, babies usually take 4 to 6 ounces per feeding, every 3-4 hours.
- Continue prenatal vitamins while breastfeeding.
- If you breastfeed or partially breastfeed, the CDC recommends adding a vitamin D supplement. 400 IU/d of vitamin D is recommended and is available over the counter (i.e. Baby-D drops or Enfamil D.Vi. Sol).
- Do not heat formula in the microwave.
- Healthy babies do not need supplemental water.
- Do not give honey or corn syrup in the first year.
- Do not offer your baby cereal or other solids until at least 4-6 months of age.
- Additionally, do not put cereal in your baby's bottles unless instructed by your healthcare provider for medical purposes. Cereal will not help a baby sleep through the night.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends children be introduced to foods other than breast milk or infant formula when they are about 4-6 months old. There is no need to introduce foods in a specific order, although it is best to start with vegetables. It may take multiple times for your baby to get used to eating new food. By the time he or she is 7 or 8 months old, your child can eat a variety of foods from different food groups. These foods include infant cereals, meat or other proteins, fruits, vegetables, grains, yogurts and cheeses, and more. Every child is different. You can look for these signs that your child is developmentally ready:

- Your child can sit with little or no support.
- Your child has good head control.
- Your child opens his or her mouth and leans forward when food is offered.

Elimination

Once your baby begins to eat solids, there will be changes in the stools (frequency, color, and consistency). This is normal and they may wake at night. If you think your baby is constipated, call our office for some helpful hints.

Sleep

Always place your baby on his back to sleep on a firm, flat mattress. The average baby sleeps 12-16 hours per 24-hour period at this age. It is normal for your baby to sleep more on some days and less on other days. Usually, by 4 months of age, babies can sleep in their own room, through

the night for at least 5-6 hours without needing to be fed. Place your baby in his crib when drowsy but still awake. He may cry before falling asleep. This is OK. He needs to learn to put himself to sleep without your help. Creating a routine within the same environment every night will help your baby to sleep. Do not encourage your baby to wake for middle-of-the-night feedings by playing and talking to him – make the nighttime boring. **Remember...back to sleep, tummy to play!**

Development/Milestones

- Smiles spontaneously, especially at people.
- Likes to play with people and may cry when playing stops.
- Begins to babble.
- Copies sounds he hears.
- Cries in different ways to show hunger, pain, or tiredness.
- Follows moving things with eyes, from side to side.
- Uses hands and eyes together, such as seeing a toy and reaching for it.
- May be able to roll over from tummy to back
- Brings hands to mouth
- Pushes down on legs when feet are on a hard surface

Safety

- Always use a car seat made for an infant and place it **rear-facing** in the back seat until at least 2 years of age. Make sure the straps are tight across the baby's chest.
- Always make sure your baby is sleeping in a safe place. The crib slats should be less than 2-3/8 inches apart.
- Infants should sleep flat on their back, without extra bedding.
- Set your hot water heater to 120°F to prevent burns and never drink hot liquids while holding your baby. Always test bath water before placing your baby in the bath.
- Never leave your baby unattended on the bed, sofa, changing table, or in the bathtub.
- Never leave your baby in the car alone, even for a minute.

Toys

Choose toys that are appropriate for your baby's age. Check for small or loose parts that could be a choking hazard. All toy pieces should be no smaller than 1-5/8 inches with no sharp or pointed edges. Avoid old painted toys that may contain lead. Do not string any toys across the crib.

Other Things....

- Know the signs of illness – temperature over 100.4 rectally, vomiting (not just spit-up), diarrhea, or failure to eat several feedings in a row. Call our office to determine if an appointment is necessary. A fever alone doesn't necessarily mean your baby needs to be seen.
- Keep your baby out of direct sunlight for extended periods of time. Protect from sun exposure with clothing, blankets, or an umbrella. If sun exposure is unavoidable, you

may use a broad-spectrum, PABA free sunscreen with at least SPF 30. Reapply frequently. Avoid using sunscreen on face or hands.

- Shaking your baby may cause serious injury or death. Never shake a baby!
- Do not smoke around your baby - it may lead to respiratory problems and allergies and can increase his risk for sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).
- Hold, talk, and sing to your baby.
- If you haven't started yet, it is a great idea to start reading to your baby. Reading promotes listening and brain development. It also gives you a chance to cuddle and bond with your baby.
- Teething may start soon. A cool teething ring can help with sore gums.
- Once your baby gets his first tooth, it is important to start cleaning gums and teeth with a soft toothbrush and a tiny drop of fluoride toothpaste (the size of a grain of rice)
- If you need help with medication dosing, please check out our website or click [here](#).

Vaccines Given at Your Child's Next Well Visit (6 months)

- DTaP, Hepatitis B, Polio Combo
- HIB
- Pneumococcal
- Rotavirus

Suggested Reading

[“What to Expect the First Year”](#)

[“Your Child’s Sleep \(Healthychildren.org\)”](#)

[“Your child, Birth to 5 years \(AAP\)”](#)

Useful Websites

[www.canyonviewpediatrics.com](#)

[www.cdc.gov/vaccines](#)

[www.aap.org](#)

[www.seatcheck.org](#)

[www.healthychildren.org](#)