

Child's Well Visit, 4 Months: Care Instructions



Your Care Instructions

You may be seeing new sides to your baby's behavior at 4 months. Your baby may have a range of emotions, including anger, joy, fear, and surprise. Your baby may be much more social and may laugh and smile at other people.

At this age, your baby may be ready to roll over and hold on to toys. They may coo, smile, laugh, and squeal. By the third or fourth month, many babies can sleep up to 7 or 8 hours during the night and develop set nap times.

Follow-up care is a key part of your child's treatment and safety. Be sure to make and go to all appointments, and call your doctor if your child is having problems. It's also a good idea to know your child's test results and keep a list of the medicines your child takes.

How can you care for your child at home?

Feeding

- If you breastfeed, let your baby decide when and how long to nurse.
- If you do not breastfeed, use a formula with iron.
- Do not give your baby honey in the first year of life. Honey can make your baby sick.
- You may begin to give solid foods when your baby is about 6 months old. Some babies may be ready for solid foods at 4 or 5 months. Ask your doctor when you can start feeding your baby solid foods. At first, give foods that are smooth, easy to digest, and part fluid, such as rice cereal.
- Use a baby spoon or a small spoon to feed your baby. Begin with one or two teaspoons of cereal mixed with breast milk or lukewarm formula. Your baby's stools

will become firmer after starting solid foods.

- Keep feeding breast milk or formula while your baby starts eating solid foods.

Parenting

- Read books to your baby daily.
- If your baby is teething, it may help to gently rub the gums or use teething rings.
- Put your baby on their stomach when awake to help strengthen the neck and arms.
- Give your baby brightly colored toys to hold and look at.

Immunizations

- Most babies get the second dose of important vaccines at their 4-month checkup. Make sure that your baby gets the recommended childhood vaccines for illnesses, such as whooping cough and diphtheria. These vaccines will help keep your baby healthy and prevent the spread of disease. Your baby needs all doses to be protected.

When should you call for help?

Watch closely for changes in your child's health, and be sure to contact your doctor if:

- You are concerned that your child is not growing or developing normally.
- You are worried about your child's behavior.
- You need more information about how to care for your child, or you have questions or concerns.

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