

4 MONTH VISIT

NAME _____ AGE _____ DATE _____

WEIGHT _____ PERCENTILE _____ HEIGHT _____ PERCENTILE _____

PHYSICIAN or NURSE PRACTITIONER: _____

What is normal development at 4 months? By this time most babies should:

- *smile, laugh, babble, and squeal.
- *raise their body up, bracing with their hands.
- *roll from front to back.
- *have good head control when sitting up (they should be able to hold their head up steadily).
- *reach for objects.
- *grasp a rattle or tightly hold on to your finger, bat at mobiles, and put things in their mouth.
- *bring their hands from their side to their midline.
- *turn towards sounds and recognize their parent's voices.

Looking ahead to the 6 month visit, most babies should:

- *imitate speech sounds, and begin to speak single (hard) consonants such as "dada."
- *roll front to back, and back to front.
- *sit with support.
- *transfer objects from one hand to the other.
- *be starting to try to feed themselves.
- *actively work towards getting toys or other objects.
- *attempt to feed themselves.
- *recognize both parents and turn to their voice.
- *may begin to show some stranger anxiety.



Anticipatory Guidance

Diet/Feeding:

- *No cow's milk.
- *May begin solid foods (iron fortified cereal, mashed fruit and vegetables) when your baby has good head control, and is not pushing all of the food back out with his tongue. Avoid citrus, eggs, and peanut butter.
- *One way to start solid foods is to mix a few teaspoons of infant rice cereal with breast milk or formula until it becomes a thin soup. Using a baby spoon, place this about half way back on the tongue.
- *Multivitamins (such as Vidaylin) only if your baby is breast fed - discuss this with your doctor or nurse practitioner.

Elimination:

- *Your baby will have her own frequency of bowel movements.
- *Most babies strain, grunt, and fuss when they have bowel movements. This does not mean that they are constipated. Constipation is hard poop, not necessarily the number of bowel movements in a day.

Sleep:

- *Establish a bedtime routine. Encourage your baby to console himself by putting him to sleep awake. Teach your 4 month old self-soothing techniques by providing her with a transition object, such as a favorite stuffed animal or blanket.
- *Babies should always be placed to sleep on their backs. Don't worry if you find the baby has rolled over

onto her stomach while sleeping. Once babies can roll over on their own, they are at reduced risk of SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome).

Dental:

- *Do not put your baby to bed with a bottle or prop it in his mouth.
- *Teething may begin. Cool (not frozen) teething toys, Tylenol, or topical anesthetics can be helpful for the pain.

Parenting:

- *Every interaction with your baby stimulates brain development. Hold, cuddle, rock, sing and read to your baby as often as you can. Talk to your baby frequently and describe things you are doing. This can help stimulate language development.
- *Begin to establish routines. Babies are generally more relaxed when meals and sleeping are on a fairly regular routine.
- *Begin to set boundaries of acceptable and unacceptable behavior.
- *Spitting up is common at this age, so have plenty of bibs and shoulder towels available.
- *Temperature Taking - Proper use of a digital rectal thermometer is important.
- *If your baby has a cold, remember most medicines do not relieve symptoms. Using a cool mist humidifier, and nasal saline/nasal bulb syringe can be helpful.
- *Reading to your baby is important, even at this early age. Start with brightly colored, simple books.
- *Learn about play groups and parent support groups.
- *Think about getting a playpen and suitable toys to keep your baby entertained.

Safety:

- *As your baby becomes more active and rolls over, he can easily fall off of elevated objects such as beds, sofas, and tables. Always keep one hand on the baby and never turn your back, even for a second, when you put your child on a high place. Your baby needs your full attention so that an injury does not happen.
- *Avoid burns - hot bath water is a frequent cause of burns; keep your water heater set below 120 degrees. Also, do not heat bottles in a microwave.
- *Limit direct sunlight and use sunscreen outdoors - babies have sensitive skin and can quickly get very painful sunburns.
- *Keep small objects (choking hazards) and sharp objects out of reach.
- *Children should not be left alone in a car, even for a minute.
- *Keep your baby's environment free from smoke. Keep the home and car as nonsmoking zones.

When to Call the Doctor:

- *Not gaining weight or becomes uninterested in eating.
- *Your baby seems very stiff or very floppy.
- *Your baby has more than a mild illness.

Next Well Baby Visit:

- *When your baby is **6 months** old.



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