



Four Months

Patient information

Patient name: _____

Date: _____

Weight: _____

Length: _____

Head circumference: _____

Immunizations

NOTE: Your child's doctor may modify the immunization schedule at times.

- **Diphtheria/Tetanus/Pertussis (DTaP)**
Protects against diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis (whooping cough).
- **Polio (IPV)**
Protects against polio virus.
- **Haemophilus influenzae B (HIB)**
Protects against a bacteria that causes meningitis, blood, and throat infections.
- **Pneumococcal Conjugate**
Protects against a type of meningitis and blood infection, and some ear infections.
- **Rotavirus**
Protects against a virus which causes severe vomiting and diarrhea.

After immunizations some infants may experience discomfort or fever. Treat any local reactions at the site of the immunizations (for example, redness or swelling) with a cool compress for ten minutes at a time every few hours. You may give your child acetaminophen as needed. Reactions from the immunizations should be gone in 48–72 hours, although a small firm non-tender lump under the skin may remain for up to two months. If the baby has a fever of 101° F (38.3° C) or higher or appears very sick after the immunizations, contact the office.

Development

Around four months your baby will begin to be much more aware of her environment. She will respond to your presence by cooing and squealing. By this time, babies are starting to outgrow their periods of fussiness which may have been present earlier.

The baby now has good use of the hands and can grasp a rattle or other object. Soon after discovering his hands, your baby will begin to be interested in his feet. He may begin to roll over between four and six months old.

Mobiles are very good for this age group. The mobile should be placed in a position about 12 inches from the baby's face so he can bat at the objects. Crib games are also appropriate. The baby will enjoy exploring his own reflection in a mirror.

Talk to your baby a lot. To promote interaction, repeat sounds back to the baby that she makes to you (for example, blowing raspberries, dadada, etc.). Read to her for a few minutes every day!

Feeding

Your baby should continue on breast milk or formula. If most of her milk is breast milk, she should take either:

Vitamin D drops (400 IU once a day) PLUS Fer-in-sol drops (0.75 mL once a day)

OR

Poly-Vi-Sol with iron (1 mL once a day) Please see the attached sheet on starting solid foods.

Special instructions

The rectal temperature in an infant normally ranges from 97.5° F (36.4° C) to 100° F (37.8° C). Please notify us if your baby has a temperature of 101° F (38.3° C) or higher rectally. But also remember that temperature is only one measure of illness. If your child is acting abnormally and you are concerned about the baby's well being, please call the office.

This is a good time to start using a playpen as it is a good, safe place to leave your baby for brief periods of time and she will like having her own space.

Safety

Sleep safety

Sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) is the most common reason for death among healthy infants, but there are a number of things parents can do to dramatically reduce the risk of SIDS:

- Remember "Back to Sleep"—infants should always be placed to sleep on their back (please note that infants who spit up or have reflux should still sleep on their backs--there is no increased risk of choking and putting them to sleep on their side or stomach increases the risk for SIDS).
- Infants should sleep in a safe, modern crib or bassinet with no pillows, stuffed animals, or other soft bedding; if bumpers are used, they should be thin (not "pillow-like") and should be secured tightly to the sides of the crib.
- Infants should sleep in the same room as their parents during the highest risk period for SIDS (approximately the first 4–6 months of life).

- Consider offering a pacifier at nap time and bedtime because it has been shown to reduce the risk of SIDS, however, if your infant refuses the pacifier, he or she should not be forced to take it.
- Avoid overheating: The infant should be lightly clothed for sleep, and the bedroom temperature should be kept comfortable for a lightly clothed adult.
- Do not smoke or allow other people to smoke around your infant.

Home safety

See the attached home safety handout for more detail.

If your baby isn't rolling over yet, he will be soon. Never leave infant on a changing table, countertop, couch, bed, or other raised surface without always having one hand on the baby. Do not rely on a changing table strap alone to restrain the baby.

Infant walkers with wheels are NOT recommended because they can be dangerous. Stationary playstations without wheels (for example, "excersaucers") are okay, but start with brief periods of time and work up.

Poisonings are an important health hazard for children. Keep all medications, cleaning products, and other potentially poisonous substances high up out of reach. Post this phone number for the poison control center near your phone: 1-800-222-1222.

As your child begins to move around, it will be very important to make your home safe. Put a hook outside the bathroom door or install toilet locks. Use caution with all hot liquids and hot surfaces. Place a barrier in front of hot radiators. Place gates at the top and bottom of all stairways. Keep plastic bags, wrappers, and latex balloons out of reach. Move dangling electric cords. Use safety plugs in outlets. Remove house plants from reach, as many are poisonous.

Car safety

Your child should be in a rear-facing car seat in the back seat of the car for all car trips, even very short ones! Adjust the shoulder straps so that they are at or below the level of your child's shoulders. The straps should fit snugly—you should only be able to get only one finger between the straps and your child. In winter, it is safer to put warm layers on top of your child after strapping her into the car seat; securing the straps on top of bulky clothing can reduce the effectiveness of the car seat. If you would like further information on child car safety or would like to find a certified car seat inspector who can check the installation of your car seat, please consult the National Highway Traffic Administration website at www.nhtsa.dot.gov.

Sun safety

Avoid the midday sun between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. as much as possible. Use a hat or canopy and light clothing that covers as much skin as possible. Sunscreen (SPF 15 or higher) may be used if needed on exposed areas of skin.

Next visit

The next visit will be at age six months. At that time she will receive the following immunizations:

- Diphtheria/Tetanus/Pertussis (DTaP)
- Polio (IPV)
- Haemophilus influenza B (HIB)
- Hepatitis B
- Pneumococcal Conjugate
- Rotavirus